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ABSTRACT

This is a summary and statistical analysis of nationwide data on women holding elective office in the United States during 1974 and 1975. It is intended to increase knowledge about women's participation in American politics and government. In response to a mailed questionnaire, women incumbents in the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, county commissions, mayoralties, and municipal and township councils provided information about themselves. The report is divided into six major parts. Part I treats numbers and location of women in office describing the small proportions of officeholders who are women, the representation of minority women, variations among the states in the numbers of women in office, and variations in the size of the populations of the districts in which women serve. Part II examines selected demographic characteristics of women in office comparing women in office with the general population of women in the United States and asking whether female officeholders differ from other women. The family situation of women officeholders is explored in Part III. Part IV examines the organizational affiliations of officeholders. The political experience and characteristics of women in office are treated in Part V. The concluding section, Part VI, discusses briefly some of the broader implications of research findings, speculating about what the future holds in light of current patterns and ongoing trends. Findings are conclusive that women are not well integrated with the political life of the nation. Further, the few women who do hold office are found most frequently in positions with little potential for affecting broad segments of the population. (Author/RM)

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PROFILE OF WOMEN HOLDING OFFICE

by

Marilyn Johnson and Kathy Stanwick

Reprinted from Women in Public Office:
A Biographical Directory and Statistical Analysis
(New York: R. R. Bowker Company, February 1976).

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Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP)
Eagleton Institute of Politics
Rutgers-The State University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

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PREFACE

"Profile of Women Holding Office" is the first summary and statistical analysis of nationwide data about women officials. Reprinted from Women in Public Office: A Biographical Directory and Statistical Analysis, this report describes women holding elective office in the United States during 1974 and 1975.[1]

The analysis explores selected personal and family characteristics of officeholders, their organizational affiliations, party identifications and patterns of officeholding. Included in the report are an examination of differences among women holding various kinds of offices and a comparison of women in office with women in the general population. Consideration is also given to age, number of terms in office and size of election district insofar as these may be related to patterns of officeholding and other characteristics of women officials. The essay is intended as a limited but fundamental step in the accumulation of evidence about the number and kinds of women in public life.

In response to a mailed questionnaire, women incumbents in the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, county commissions, mayoralties and municipal and township councils provided facts about themselves for this analysis.[2] Names of women officials were collected from state manuals, legislative reference guides, government staff offices and civic organizations. Many government staffers and members of nongovernmental organizations across the country prepared lists of women officeholders especially for this project. (Complete lists of names and accurate addresses were not available uniformly at every level of office in four states as shown in the State Summary table printed at the end of the report.) Procedures to maximize response to the questionnaire included a follow-up mailing, a reminder postcard and, where feasible, telephone calls. (Mayors and council members in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Texas received only one mailing.) As a result of these efforts, "Profile of Women Holding Office" examines information about 3562 women, 3298 of whom responded to the questionnaire. Partial information about the additional 264 women was obtained from previously published biographical material.

This essay is addressed to all those who seek to understand and encourage the participation of women in public life. The report as well as the larger volume Women in Public Office are part of the Center for the American Woman and Politics' ongoing efforts to increase knowledge about women's participation in American politics and government.

The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) was established in 1971 as a research, education and information center under a Ford Foundation grant to the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey. CAWP encourages the full and effective involvement of women in the public life of our nation.

Women in Public Office was compiled with the help of a special grant from the Mobil Foundation, Inc. and an anonymous grant awarded on the recommendation of Joint Foundation Support, Inc. The R. R. Bowker Company assisted with manuscript preparation costs. All CAWP's projects benefit from general support granted by The Ford Foundation.

[1]The pagination for this reprint reflects the page numbers found in the larger volume Women in Public Office: A Biographical Directory and Statistical Analysis (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, February 1976). In this reprinted version, the State Summary table is not found on p. xv, but at the end of the essay following the Selected Bibliography.

[2]For a more detailed description of the methods and sources of data gathering, see the Introduction to Women in Public Office. Inquiries regarding this study or its methods should be addressed to Marilyn Johnson, Director of Research, CAWP, Eagleton Institute, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901.

STATISTICAL ESSAY: PROFILE OF WOMEN HOLDING OFFICE

by Marilyn Johnson and Kathy Stanwick

Fifty-five years after suffrage, women are barely represented in the public life of the nation. While notable changes have occurred in other aspects of women's lives--in the age at which they marry, the number of children they bear, how long they can expect to live, the education they receive, and their involvement in the labor force--American women in 1975 still play only a minuscule role in the polity.

Why are women absent from political roles? The reasons are unclear, but there have been many speculations: biological unsuitability, cultural proscriptions, sex discrimination, incongruity of political life with the preferences and motivations learned by women while growing up, and incompatibility between the demands of political office and the traditional priority of responsibility for home and family.

Who are those few women who do serve in public office? Common and contradictory stereotypes have implied that since so few women are politically active, either they are unsuited for officeholding or those who do achieve office are somehow different from other women. One hears frequently that women in office are housewives with unstable family lives, widows who have inherited their husbands' offices, divorcees, or careerist single women; that they are highly calculating, aggressive and manipulative or, paradoxically, that they are emotional and ineffective; that they are young feminists or are traditional community do-gooders who have outgrown the PTA.

Assumptions abound and stereotypes flourish. Yet there has been no large-scale, systematic research either to investigate the causes of women's absence from the polity or to describe those few women who are politically active. Lacking documentation, arguments have remained hypothetical.

This report examines the statistical results of several thousand questionnaires completed by women currently holding office across the country. Intended as a limited but essential step toward developing accurate knowledge about women and the polity, it offers a basic description of the number and kinds of women holding elected office during 1974 and 1975 at federal, state, county and local levels. The analysis is divided into six major parts:

Part I describes the numbers and location of women in office: the proportions of officeholders who are women, the representation of minority women, variations among the states in the numbers of women in office, and variations in the size of the populations of the districts in which women serve.

Part II examines selected demographic characteristics of women in office. It compares women in office with the general population of women in the United States and asks whether female officeholders differ from other women in the political interest of the families in which they grew up, in residential stability or mobility, in age, education, occupation, or employment status.

Part III explores the family situation of women officeholders--their marital status, status as mothers, characteristics of their husbands, and family income.

Part IV is focused on an aspect of social participation that is often intimately connected with political activity: the organizational affiliations of officeholders. It considers the number and kinds of memberships political women hold in organizations, with particular attention to affiliation with women's organizations.

Part V examines the political experience and characteristics of women in office. This section describes their party ties, past officeholding experience, and selected aspects of the offices in which they serve--the salary received, the amount of time devoted to officeholding, and the committees on which they sit.

Part VI, the concluding section, discusses briefly some of the broader implications of the research findings, speculating about what the future holds in light of current patterns and ongoing trends.

While this essay reports basic and previously unavailable data on women in office, many important questions remain unanswered. Some answers await further research and the accumulation of evidence. For example, this research does not examine attitudes and opinions of women officeholders about their political roles or about social issues. Other answers require more detailed analysis of our data than can be presented in this account.[1] In addition, some of the research findings in this report may be interpreted in varying ways.[2] (Footnote 2 discusses some problems of interpretation.)

Table 1 describes the numbers and percentages of women in each office for whom statistical information is available. (See the Introduction to this book for a description of data-gathering procedures.) There is always the danger that those who did not receive questionnaires or who failed to respond are very different from those who replied. Although we have no reason to suspect serious "response bias" in our data, caution demands that the reported percentages and averages be regarded as good approximations and not as exact figures. More attention should be paid to the size, consistency and patterning of differences between categories than to any single number.[3] (To assist those who may be unfamiliar with tabular presentation, Footnote 3 supplies simple instructions for reading the tables in this essay.) This caveat applies especially to the local and county levels, where returns are less complete.

Therefore, while we are pleased to publish this first broad examination of women in public office, we urge the healthy skepticism that must accompany any single research effort. We offer this early contribution as a useful foundation for understanding women in the polity.

I. NUMBERS AND LOCATION OF WOMEN IN OFFICE

The most striking fact about women in political office is that they are so few. As of this writing, women hold roughly four to seven percent of all public offices in the United States, although they comprise 53% of the voting population. Regardless of the level or branch of government, women constitute but a minuscule proportion of elected and appointed officeholders. Although the extent and consistency of this fact are still in the process of being documented precisely, a few current examples will serve to illustrate the paucity of women in public life (see the State Summaries on p. xv for more detail).

Federal Offices

One women serves in the federal cabinet; none has ever served on the Supreme Court. Of 675 federal judges, eight (about 1%) are women. Nineteen women are members of the House of Representatives, none of the Senate--a "representation" of less than 4% in the 94th Congress.

TABLE 1. NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF ELECTED OFFICEHOLDERS INCLUDED IN STATISTICAL PROFILE

	U.S. House of Representatives	State Executive Office[a]	State Senate	State House	County Commission	Mayoralty[b]	Municipal and Township Council
Total women in office	19	84[c]	89	521	456	566	5,365
Number analyzed in statistical profile[d]	19	69	58	494	264	300	2,064
Number in profile as percentage of total women in office[e]	100%	82%	99%	95%	58%	53%	38%

[a] Includes some appointed officials.

[b] Includes equivalent on council when no mayor exists.

[c] Only statewide executive officials having cabinet-level or higher positions were selected for statistical analysis. The larger total of 134 indicated on the State Summaries on p. xv includes a number of statewide elected officials below the cabinet level.

[d] Totals used for calculation of percentages in subsequent tables may not equal the totals in this table. They will vary with the number of respondents choosing to answer a particular question and with the number of respondents for whom a particular question is applicable.

[e] A sizable proportion of women officeholders at the county and local levels did not receive questionnaires because they were on lists received after the cutoff date of July 10, 1975. At the federal and state levels, information on some officeholders who did not receive or return questionnaires was gathered through secondary sources. Thus the proportion for whom information is available does not accurately reflect the tendency to respond to the questionnaire. The actual rate of response to the questionnaire was higher at local and county levels, lower at state and federal levels than the figures above would suggest.

State Offices

Among women in state governments as of October 1975, there was one governor, one lt. governor. Even a broad definition of state cabinet members and statewide elected officials--one that includes such offices as the elected judiciary, university trustees and members of state boards of education--yields no more than 10% women, 134 of an estimated 1,300 offices. In the state legislatures, 8% are women--89 state senators out of 1,978, and 521 representatives from a total of 5,583.

County and Local Offices

At county and local levels women are no better represented. On county governing bodies they hold 456 (less than 3%) of an estimated 17,000 positions. Among mayors and members of municipal or township councils, an estimated 5% are women. Even on school boards, where the common view is that women are numerous because of their interest in education and PTA activities, only 13% of school board members nationally were women in 1973-74 (National School Boards Association, Fifty State School Boards Associations, Evanston, Ill., 1975, p. 2).

Proportions of Minority Women

If women are scarce in government, minority women are even scarcer. Two separate pieces of evidence attest to this fact. The first, shown in Table 2-A, is the self-designated status of women in office who returned our questionnaire. Few black or other minority women are among these officeholders. While there is a slight hint that black and other minority women have found more opportunity to serve above the local level, the proportions at county and state levels are also very low.

For black women, the low proportions occurring in our questionnaire data are confirmed by a second set of figures, reported in Table 2-B. This table shows the numbers of black female elected officials, as supplied by the Joint Center for Political Studies and calculated as a percentage of total women in office. The JCPS data are quite similar to the findings in Table 2-A.

The low representation of minority women in office is illustrated by the fact that the U.S. Bureau of the Census reports black women as constituting between 10% and 11% of the

TABLE 2. MINORITY WOMEN ARE A VERY SMALL PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN OFFICE

2-A (based on questionnaire returns)

	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Black	(4)[a]	6	5	8	5	2	2
White	(14)	90	90	90	93	97	97
Other	(1)	4	5	2	2	1	1
Total[b]	(19)	(53)	(76)	(364)	(252)	(288)	(2,008)

2-B (based on total count)

	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
Number of black elected women[c]	(4)	none[d]	(3)	(32)	(25)	(9)	(137)
Total number of elected women	(19)		(89)	(521)	(456)	(566)	(5,365)
Black elected as % of total	(4)	None[d]	3	6	5	2	3

[a] In this and subsequent tables, numbers too small for meaningful percentaging are presented as absolute numbers (in parentheses) in the body of the table.

[b] Officeholders not answering the question have been excluded from the percentage base in this and subsequent tables.

[c] Source: Joint Center for Political Studies, National Roster of Black Elected Officials, Vol. 5, July 1975, p. xxvi.

[d] Refers to elected officials only. CAWP figures include officials appointed to cabinet-level positions.

total U.S. female population aged 18 years and over (computed from Current Population Reports, P-25, No. 529). If black women were a proportional representation of all women in office, they would have at least this percentage of the total. Only in Congress, where four black women serve, is this criterion of proportionality satisfied.

Variations Among the States

The proportions of officeholders who are women are uniformly low, but there are notable variations by state and by type of area within these small percentages. Both diversity and concentration characterize geographic patterns of officeholding. No one state or region is consistently high in the numbers of women in every type of office.

Interstate diversity in the numbers of women officials (as manifest in the State Summaries, p. xv) may occur for numerous reasons having no connection with the propensity of women to seek office or their ability to be elected. Numbers are affected by variations in the size of governing bodies, in the number of such bodies within each state, and in the presence or absence of particular offices and governmental forms such as counties or townships.

Ideally, we would report state by state the proportion of women found among the total number of officials (female and male combined) in each office. However, such information is readily available only for Congress and the state legislatures. Therefore, except for the state legislatures--where we examine the percentages of women among the total legislators of each state--we present a simple description of where, among all women in a particular office, the largest or smallest numbers are serving.

Members of Congress. The nineteen women in the 94th Congress represent districts in fourteen states. New York has three women in the U.S. House of Representatives; New Jersey, Maryland and California each have two; the remaining ten states--Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Tennessee and Texas--have elected one each. Thus thirty-six states have no women in Congress.

The state executive.[4] Alabama leads in the number of women in state executive, cabinet-level offices, with six. Georgia, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina and Texas have none.

State legislators. Any profile of women state legislators must note that New Hampshire alone accounts for 20% (102) of all women in lower houses.[5] Three other New England states--Connecticut, Maine and Vermont are next highest in the number of women state representatives, with 4% each of the total. Alabama is lowest with a lone woman in its legislature.

State senators are more evenly spread throughout the states and are few in every state. Arizona leads with five, followed by Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Montana, South Dakota and Washington, each with four.

Percentages of total legislators who are women. Although nationally women are 8% of the total number of legislators (male and female combined), Table 3 reveals that four states--Arizona, Colorado, Delaware and New Hampshire--have at least double this proportion. But women constitute 4% or less of the state legislature in seventeen states. Among these are a number of southern states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. The large and populous northern states of New York and Pennsylvania, as well as California, Minnesota, Nebraska and New Mexico, also have only about half the national percentage of women in their state legislatures.

County commissioners. Women in county office are most numerous in Wisconsin and Michigan, each with 13% of the total women on county governing bodies. At the other extreme Arkansas, Maine, Montana, Vermont and Utah have no women in these county offices.

Mayors. Women as mayors are prominently found in the West North Central region, where Iowa and Missouri each account for 5% of the total number of women serving as mayors, and where Minnesota and Kansas have 4%. However, scattered individual states have as many women mayors; Arkansas, California, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas also have from 4% to 6% of the total.

Municipal and township councilors. Among municipalities and township councils, Michigan is unique in the large number of women. Of all the women in office at these levels, 10% are from Michigan. Iowa and Missouri hold second place, each accounting for 5% of the total.

Population of District

At county and local levels, women hold office in districts with small populations. We asked respondents to indicate the "size of population of the location or district from which you were elected."[6] Among those answering this question, the majority of mayors and municipal councilors--and nearly 30% of county commissioners--report districts with populations under 5,000. Table 4 shows the cumulative percentages of officeholders from districts with less than a specified population

TABLE 3. SOUTHERN STATES AND SOME OF THE LARGER, MORE POPULOUS STATES ARE AMONG THOSE HAVING THE LOWEST PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN THEIR LEGISLATURES (as of October 1975)

	% Women among State Legislators[a]		% Women among State Legislators[a]		% Women among State Legislators[a]
NEW ENGLAND		WEST NORTH CENTRAL		WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	
Maine	13	Minnesota	4	Arkansas	2
Vermont	12	Iowa	9	Oklahoma	4
New Hampshire	24	Missouri	6	Louisiana	1
Massachusetts	6	North Dakota	10	Texas	4
Connecticut	14	South Dakota	10		
Rhode Island	6	Nebraska	2	MOUNTAIN	
		Kansas	5	Montana	9
MIDDLE ATLANTIC				Idaho	10
New York	4	SOUTH ATLANTIC		Wyoming	8
New Jersey	8	Delaware	16	Nevada	12
Pennsylvania	4	Maryland	10	Utah	8
		West Virginia	7	Colorado	16
EAST NORTH CENTRAL		Virginia	4	Arizona	20
Wisconsin	8	North Carolina	9	New Mexico	4
Illinois	6	South Carolina	4		
Indiana	6	Georgia	4	PACIFIC	
Michigan	6	Florida	8	Washington	12
Ohio	7			Oregon	12
		EAST SOUTH CENTRAL		California	2
		Kentucky	4		
		Tennessee	4	Alaska	15
		Alabama	1		
		Mississippi	3	Hawaii	13

Source: Compiled by National Women's Education Fund, Washington, D.C.

[a]See State Summaries, p. xv, for absolute numbers of women in state houses and senates.

size. It offers dramatic evidence of the degree to which the "typical" woman in office is not found in the larger urban centers of power. She serves in the smaller towns and sparsely populated counties of the U.S.[7]

TABLE 4. WOMEN IN COUNTY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVE IN PREDOMINANTLY SMALL DISTRICTS

District Population	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %
Over 25,000	42	9	14
Under 25,000	58	91	86
Under 10,000	44	79	72
Under 5,000	29	69	59
Under 1,000	6	44	29
Total	(245)	(287)	(1,906)

There is a suggestion in these data, however, that women in their first term are being elected from somewhat larger districts. The change is small but consistent. Thus among councilwomen, 30% of those in their first term, but only 23% of those in their second or higher term, report election from districts with population of 10,000 or more. The parallel figures for mayors are 26% vs. 22%; for county commissioners, 60% vs. 51%.

District population is an important key to understanding the profiles of officials at local and county levels. Later sections of the analysis reveal that women from smaller districts differ noticeably from others in residential stability, education, employment status, family income, organizational ties, political experience and activity in office.

II. INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUND OF OFFICEHOLDERS

Since so few women serve in public office, one might expect to find them a demographically distinct group. The reality is more elusive. In many ways, women officials are similar to other women in the U.S. population. They differ primarily in ways in which leaders and elites of both sexes tend to differ from the general population.

A more fruitful issue is how women officials, distinguished mainly by the unusual fact that

they do participate actively in public affairs, combine officeholding with other roles. Political office is only one of the roles occupied by these women. They may also be wives, mothers, employed workers, feminists, hobbyists, widows, housewives, young, old, divorcees, party workers, urbanites, suburbanites, farmers, and all the other "ers" "ists" and "ites" commonly used to characterize the positions and activities of people.

Is officeholding the central activity of women officials? Are other activities curtailed or phased differently in their life cycles? Even though the diversity of women holding office is quite large if one examines the range of types, do a few types stand out? Do these types supply clues to some of the conditions that may facilitate or hinder entry into office? These questions underlie our examination of the characteristics of women in office.

Political Interest in the Family

Political people often come from political families. Past research indicates that this may be especially true of women. Given few role models and the paucity of readily available information outside the family, it is not surprising that women in office repeatedly emphasize how important to their own interest in politics was the interest of their families while they were growing up.

We asked our respondents a standard question often used in survey research: "On the whole, when you were growing up, would you say that your (father) (mother) was very much interested in politics, somewhat interested in politics, or didn't pay much attention to politics?"[8] Table 5 shows the percentages who report mothers or fathers as "very much interested," and supplies for comparison the data from women of voting age in a national survey of the population conducted in 1972 by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center.

Interpretation of responses to this question must be highly tentative, since we have asked remembrance or perception of phenomena that may be influenced by the individual's own current interest. Nevertheless, there are some clear patterns of response which challenge simple assumptions about direct family inheritance of political interest.

Women in office do not differ markedly from the general female population of voting age regarding the remembered interest of their parents in politics.[9] Only at the level of the state senate and higher is there even a faint suggestion that either fathers or mothers of officeholders were, as a group, more politically interested than other parents.

Parental interest and age of officeholder. If we examine in Table 6 parental interest within separate categories of age, we find that the younger the officeholder, the less likely she is to report her parents as highly interested in politics.[10] A similar pattern is true of the national sample of U.S. women.[11]

As described in a later section of this report, women in office are older than the general population of women. Thus the question presents itself of whether the research finding in Table 5, of no difference between officeholders and other women in levels of parental interest in politics, may have occurred only because the two groups differ in their age profiles. Such is not the case,

TABLE 5. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THE GENERAL POPULATION IN THEIR RECALL OF PARENTAL INTEREST IN POLITICS

	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council	U.S. sample women aged 18+ years.[a]
Percent who say MOTHER was very much interesteted in politics	(5)[b] (12)	26 (43)[c]	24 (63)	22 (300)	17 (245)	19 (276)	18 (1,946)	20 (1,433)
Percent who say FATHER was very much interested in politics	(5)[b] (11)	49 (41)[c]	54 (61)	38 (287)	41 (238)	41 (257)	38 (1,889)	42 (1,377)

[a]Source: 1972 American National Election study of the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan

[b]In this and subsequent tables, numbers too small for meaningful percentaging are presented as absolute numbers (in parentheses) in the body of the table.

[c]In this and subsequent tables, whenever a number in parentheses appears beneath a percentage in a column, this number is the total upon which the percentage is based.

TABLE 6. PARENTS OF YOUNGER WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE REMEMBERED AS LESS INTERESTED IN POLITICS THAN PARENTS OF OLDER OFFICEHOLDERS[a]

	State House			County Comsn.			Mayoralty			Munic. Council			Sample U.S. Women		
Age	19-39	40-54	55+	19-39	40-54	55+	19-39	40-54	55+	19-39	40-54	55+	19-39	40-54	55+
Percent who say MOTHER very interested in politics	11 (88)	20 (133)	36 (64)	13 (62)	14 (127)	31 (51)	11 (37)	16 (138)	26 (94)	13 (493)	19 (897)	21 (499)	18 (591)	22 (355)	22 (439)
Percent who say FATHER very interested in politics	31 (85)	34 (125)	48 (63)	31 (61)	41 (121)	49 (51)	27 (33)	37 (126)	50 (91)	28 (479)	38 (869)	48 (488)	33 (555)	45 (344)	50 (429)

[a]Congress, state executive and state senate have been omitted because of totals too small for the age breakdowns shown.

however. A comparison between officeholders and women of the same age in the general population can be made by examining the percentages for one age category at a time across each row in Table 6. Within each category of age, the same pattern as for the aggregate of the two groups is revealed: women in office are generally no more likely than other women to indicate that their families had a high level of interest in politics.

The findings of Tables 5 and 6 fail to support the common assertion that political people are especially likely to come from political families. Shall we conclude, then, that the family is irrelevant to political socialization? Or that socialization takes more subtle and indirect forms than simple transmission of interest in politics?

Clearly, a great deal of further research is required before any conclusions are drawn. Perhaps the frame of reference for officeholders and the general population differs; what constitutes high interest to the general population may be only moderate or low interest to those more active politically. Another possibility is that interest in politics is not the primary motivational force in seeking office. Many officeholders may define their activity as public service, not as involvement in politics. If so, then the level of parental interest in politics may be relatively unimportant as a direct influence on women's own motivation to achieve office.

Should our research be confirmed in future investigations, one implication is that understanding the political life of women requires a shift in focus--away from family socialization to other experiences and roles characteristic of the lives of adult women.

Residential Stability

Women in office are not a highly mobile group, and this fact may supply one clue to the low numbers of women currently serving. Table 7 shows that the median years of residence in the state in which office is held ranges from 29 to 43 years. Residence in the same community is from 20 to 25 years.

Length of residence is in part a reflection of the age of officeholders. Older women have lived in the same community longer than have younger women. For example, those 55 and over have spent 30 to 35 years in the same community. Yet even among those under 40, average residence is from 10 to 15 years.

Residential stability is more marked in the

TABLE 7. WOMEN IN OFFICE SHOW A HIGH DEGREE OF RESIDENTIAL STABILITY

	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
Median years of residence in same COMMUNITY	20 (12)	21 (47)	20 (66)	20 (309)	22 (253)	25 (283)	20 (1,986)
Median years of residence in same STATE	40 (11)	42 (48)	37 (65)	29 (297)	37 (243)	43 (274)	36 (1,958)

smaller districts, where the bulk of women officials serve. Comparing those from districts with over vs. under 10,000 population, we find that women from smaller districts have lived longer in their communities. Municipal councilors from the larger districts average 18 years in the same community, while those in the smaller places average 21 years. The parallel figures for mayors are 20 years in larger districts, 26 in smaller; for county officials they are 20 and 24 years respectively.

In a highly mobile society, in which women by custom or by law make their residence where their husbands choose, many women may have little opportunity to establish the constituencies that could lead to officeholding. Yet long residence in the same community may be an even more important condition for women than for men in establishing such constituencies. Men are more likely than women to have occupational credentials that give them visibility, a reputation for expertise, and access to policy-making networks. In sum, some kinds of occupations may serve as shortcuts to office, decreasing the time required to establish reputation and a personal network of influence.[2] To the extent that women lack an occupational base relevant to influence-building, entry into political office may be delayed until the possibility of achieving office has been undergirded by many years of community service and of involvement in organizational and personal networks.

Age

Perhaps patterns of residential stability are implicated in the ages of women officials. Women in office are older than the general population of women, although reported ages range from 19 to 86 years.

Despite this great range, certain central tendencies appear. Relatively few women officials are under 30, as shown in Table 8, although 28% of the U.S. population of voting-age women are in this younger category. Nor are officeholders elderly relative to the general population of adult females. The proportion over 60 years of age among officeholders is lower than the percentage over 60 among adult women in the U.S. On the average, women in office are middle-aged and a few years older than women in general. Their median age hovers in the late 40's and early 50's, whereas the median age of women over 18 in the U.S. is 43 years.

It is not surprising that women in office are somewhat older than other women--persons in positions of formal leadership generally tend to be older. Nonetheless, the women's age, and the fact that their age does not differ much from one office to another, raises questions about political careers for women. Past research suggests that women in office are older than male officials. Have women delayed political activity because of their traditional domestic and family responsibilities? Traditional roles of women may delay political careers in two obvious ways. First, women may give priority in their younger years to childrearing. Second, if childrearing keeps women in the home, they may not acquire occupational credentials that help to ease entry into office. Lacking a readily identifiable set of skills implied by an occupational label, women may require years of community activity before they are considered qualified for political office.

Age of Entry into Office

Ages of current officeholders obviously do not indicate the ages at which they began their political careers. Women serving a first term in office are generally younger than those who have served more than one term, partly because tenure of office and growing older inevitably

TABLE 8. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE, ON THE AVERAGE, OLDER THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION OF VOTING AGE

Age	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council	U.S. Pop. Women Aged 18+ yr.[a]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Under 30 yrs.	(0)	-	1	7	4	2	4	28
30-39	(4)	10	22	22	21	11	22	
40-49	(6)	36	26	28	31	30	32	
50-59	(6)	32	36	29	32	35	26	
60+ yr.	(2)	22	15	14	12	22	16	24
Total	(18)	(60)	(78)	(412)	(253)	(288)	(1,983)	
Median Age	48	50	49	47	48	51	47	43

[a]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 529, p. 4. Data are for 1974.

occur together. To examine the degree to which traditional sex roles may have inhibited women's political participation, we require some indicator of their age at entry into public life. If the social status of women has changed in ways that would facilitate political careers, one manifestation of such change might be a decline over time in the average age of women entering office.

Table 9 presents the median ages of women in office at the time they entered their current offices, for each two-year period extending as far back as 1965. (The time series is not complete for every office because too few women have been incumbents of the same office long enough to permit computations over the entire decade.) The results indicate a consistent and marked decline through time in the median age of entry into current office. It seems that increasingly younger women are finding it possible to achieve office.[13]

Is this striking decline in age of entering office a manifestation of the changing status of women? If so, we should find among younger women--in their educations, occupations, family lives, employment situations and organizational ties--fewer characteristics traditionally considered barriers to political participation. As the statistical report proceeds, we shall often address this issue.

TABLE 9. AMONG WOMEN CURRENTLY SERVING, THE MEDIAN AGE AT ENTRY INTO OFFICE IS LOWER FOR MORE RECENT ENTRANTS

	Year of Entry into Current Office				
Median Age of Entry to:[a]	1974 -75	1972 -73	1970 -71	1968 -69	1966 -67
State Senate	45 (31)	51 (25)			
State House	44 (174)	46 (119)	53 (32)	53 (18)	
County Comsn.	46 (97)	46 (99)	52 (23)		
Mayoralty	48 (88)	50 (121)	50 (43)	61 (17)	
Munic. Council	44 (596)	46 (854)	48 (284)	51 (95)	53 (35)

[a]The time series is not complete for every office because too few women have been incumbents of the same office for a long enough period to permit computations over the entire decade.

Education

Officeholding has few formal requirements or restrictions other than age, residence and citizenship. This fact is reflected in the wide educational range of women in office, as shown by Table 10. Some have not graduated from high school; others possess Ph.D.'s. Only at state and federal levels are a majority of these women college graduates. Yet women who achieve office, like leaders generally, tend to have higher educational and occupational status than the population at large. In Table 10, comparison of the incumbents of each type of office with women in the U.S. population reveals that the aggregate of officeholders have had far more formal education. For example, 10% of women in the general

TABLE 10. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE BETTER EDUCATED THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION, THOUGH AT COUNTY AND LOCAL LEVELS A MAJORITY ARE NOT COLLEGE GRADUATES

Education	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council	U.S. Female Pop. 25+ yrs.[a]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than high school diploma	-	2	1	3	6	9	9	39
High school graduate[b]	-	11	5	15	28	33	29	40
Some college	(6)	20	22	27	23	23	24	11
College graduate	(4)	18	22	27	24	18	19	7
Some graduate work, M.A. or equivalent[c]	(1)	25	34	23	18	16	17	3
Ph.D. or equivalent[c]	(8)	24	16	5	1	1	2	
Total	(19)	(66)	(80)	(423)	(260)	(283)	(2,001)	

[a]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-20, No. 274 (December 1974), p. 15. Data are for March 1974. Percentages refer to number of years of schooling completed rather than degrees earned, as follows: less than 4 years high school, 4 years high school, 1-3 years college, 4 years college, 5 or more years college.

[b]Includes those with additional non-college training.

[c]Includes some with law degrees.

population over 25 years of age have had four or more years of college, compared with 35% of mayors, the officials with the lowest percentage of college graduates.

Education and age. The societal trend to increasing educational attainment, which results in younger women having more formal education than their elders, may operate to facilitate the entry of younger women into office. Younger women officeholders do have more education than their older colleagues. For example, 75% of state representatives under age 40 are college graduates, compared with 50% of those aged 40-54 years and 42% of those over 55. Similarly, 45% of younger municipal councilors have college degrees, while only 36% and 35% of those in the older age categories are graduates.

Education and district size. If education is, indeed, one of those facilitators to officeholding that ease the process by which a candidate gains recognition as qualified, then we would expect women in the larger districts, where it may be more difficult to achieve reputation through personal interaction, to have higher education than their counterparts in less urban areas. Such is in fact the case, at least among those offices whose numbers permit analysis by district size. Table 11 reveals that the percentage of college graduates from districts over 10,000 population exceeds in every office the proportion with college degrees from the smaller districts.

TABLE 11. OFFICEHOLDERS IN LARGER DISTRICTS HAVE HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION[a]

% College Graduates in:	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
Districts under 10,000 pop.	55 (74)	34 (105)	29 (215)	32 (1,343)
Districts over 10,000 pop.	62 (216)	52 (137)	58 (60)	55 (529)

[a]Because of numbers too small for analysis, Congress, the state executive, and state senate have been omitted from the table.

Occupation

As shown by Table 12, the occupational classifications of women in office reflect their high educational levels. The majority of those who report a past or current occupation are professional or managerial and administrative.

In most categories of officeholding, occupations are concentrated among those traditionally held by women. At county and local levels, for example, approximately one-quarter of those reporting are (or were) secretarial-clerical workers. Altogether, the "feminine" occupations of librarian, health worker, social worker, teacher or secretary comprise from one-third to more than half the occupations of women in office. Relatively few have occupations in law, journalism, public administration or insurance and real estate, which are frequently associated with political activity and entry into office. Although law is a prominent occupation at the level of state senator and above, fewer than 2% in the total sample are lawyers.

Occupation and age. Despite the rising educational levels of younger women in office, there are few clear and consistent differences by age in their occupational profiles. Women under age 40 are somewhat more likely to be classified as professional and less likely to be found in the managerial-administrative category, but there are no noticeable differences in the sex-linked nature of the occupations of younger and older women in office. Yet changes are ongoing in the larger society, as illustrated by marked increases in the proportions of law students who are women. One might expect such changes to be manifest among younger women officeholders. Still, it must be remembered that "younger," applied to women in office, usually means over 30 years of age. Perhaps even younger women in office are not young enough to have experienced emergent changes in the occupations of women. If so, it may be several years before the occupational background of younger women in office becomes markedly different from that of older officeholders.

Employment

Holding office is often not the sole career or occupation of political women. Substantial proportions of women in office have paid employment in addition to their official activity, as shown by Table 13. Indeed, the rate of employment among mayors and councilors is somewhat higher than in the general population of adult women. The percentage split between full- and part-time employment is similar to that of women at large. As the level of office rises, however, the proportions employed tend to decline. Variations by level of office and size of district served suggest that employment of officeholders is more common where the duties of office are relatively undemanding.

Employment and district population. Rates of employment are also lower in the larger districts. In districts with populations over 10,000, 22% of county commissioners, 27% of mayors and 48% of municipal councilors have either full- or part-time employment. These percentages are in contrast to the 34% of county officials, 55% of mayors and 60% of

TABLE 12. WOMEN IN OFFICE HAVE A RESTRICTED RANGE OF OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE, CONCENTRATED HEAVILY IN TRADITIONAL FEMALE OCCUPATIONS

Current or Past Occupation	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Professional, technical and kindred	(7)	39	66	55	34	34	37
Librarians	-	-[a]	-	-	1	3	1
Health technicians and nurses	-	-	6	6	3	4	3
Social workers	-	3	2	2	2	-	1
College teachers	(2)	3	8	5	4	4	4
Elementary and secondary teachers	(1)	-	16	18	16	15	16
Editors and reporters	-	6	4	1	1	2	2
Lawyers	(4)	17	18	5	1	1	1
Managers, administrators,[b] proprietors	(4)	50	16	19	28	28	23
Public administrators	(1)	33	8	5	5	2	2
Sales workers	-	3	10	8	7	4	6
Insurance and real estate	-	3	6	6	2	3	3
Clerical-secretarial and kindred	(1)	8	4	15	23	27	27
Craftswomen and kindred		-	-	-	1	-	1
Operatives	-	-	-	-	1	3	2
Laborers, except farm	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Farmers and family farm workers	-	-	2	3	1	-	1
Service, except private household	-	-	2	-	1	4	3
Private household	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Total	(12)	(36)	(51)	(265)	(146)	(182)	(1,337)

[a]Indicates none or less than .5%.

[b]Educational and health administrators have been included in the professional category.

TABLE 13. SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTIONS OF WOMEN HAVE OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT WHILE HOLDING OFFICE

Employment Status	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council	U.S. Pop. Women Aged 20+ yr.[a]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employed	(2)	12	38	39	27	49	56	42
Full time	-	2	16	10	12	35	37	31
Part time	(2)	4	11	10	14	12	18	11
Employed, no answer on time	-	6	11	19	1	2	1	
Not employed	(13)	88	62	61	73	51	44	58
Employed before office	(9)	64	32	32	33	20	15	
Not employed before office	(3)	14	29	24	35	29	26	
No answer on employment before office	(1)	10	1	5	5	2	3	
Total	(15)	(49)	(75)	(408)	(253)	(285)	(1,996)	

[a]Data are for June 1975. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings (July 1975). Vol. 22, No. 1.

local councilors from smaller districts who are employed.

Employment and age. Just as higher levels of education among younger officeholders are not reflected in the types of occupations held, increased formal education has not resulted in higher employment levels among younger women in office. Officeholders under 40 and those aged 40-54 years are equally likely to be employed (though both age categories show higher percentages employed than women aged 55 years and over, a fact that reflects to some unknown degree the normal attrition of retirement). Perhaps women under 40 who hold office are less active in the labor force than would be expected on the basis of their education because of greater involvement in childrearing. If so, the nacure of family resources may be critical in permitting women with familial responsibilities the opportunity for political office.

III. FAMILY SITUATION

Whenever the social participation of women outside the family is examined, whether it be in the labor force, in organizations, or in the polity, the demands of family life are invoked as inhibitors of the public activity of women. The traditional division of labor has assigned women to the care of husband, children and house. Many have assumed that it is principally women who are free of domestic involvement--whether because of life stage or because of active rejection of conventional feminine roles --who commit themselves to extrafamilial roles. Is this true of politically active women? Are those who participate in public affairs generally women with atypical family situations? Apparently not. As we examine the family characteristics of women in office, we shall find that, by and large, political women are not very different in their familial roles from women in the general population.

t a number of points in our description we suggest that marriage and children are not necessarily impediments to a political career. This position receives reinforcement in Part V of this report, where we point out that marriage and children have little or no effect on the amount of time devoted to officeholding activities.

To be sure, an argument for the family as a political asset must not be overdrawn. Not all husbands of officeholders are high-income professionals interested in politics and able to assist their wives. The fact that officeholders ordinarily do not have young children at home could mean that childrearing has delayed entry into politics. Moreover, our data are for the most part demographic and cannot provide insight into the more subtle aspects of family interaction. Yet, on balance, there would seem to be no compelling reason to posit any intrinsic incompatibility between family and political roles

Marital Status

Familiar stereotypes project women in office as widows who have inherited their husbands' offices, as divorcees whose divorces are either cause or consequence of their political activity, or as single women whose demanding careers leave no room for marriage. Despite the popular imagination, the marital profile of women in office is strikingly similar to that of the U.S. population of women.[14] As Table 14 reveals, in every office except Congress and the state executive,[15] political women are as likely or more likely than other women to be married, and they are no more likely to be divorced, widowed or single. Although the data challenge the stereotype, the research finding is not surprising, if one considers the emphasis given to conventional family life as a political asset of males.

TABLE 14. MOST WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE MARRIED--THE PROFILE OF THEIR MARITAL STATUS IS SIMILAR TO THE GENERAL POPULATION OF WOMEN

Marital Status	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council	U.S. Pop. Women Aged 30+ yr.[a]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Married	(11)	56	70	76	74	71	75	68
Divorced/Separated	(2)	9	12	6	5	8	5	8
Widowed	(4)	22	9	11	15	15	14	18
Single	(2)	13	9	7	6.	6	6	6
Total	(19)	(63)	(78)	(430)	(262)	(293)	(2,036)	

[a]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-20, No. 271. Data are for 1974.

Husbands

Quite possibly, the husbands of those women who do achieve office represent a facilitating resource for, rather than a hindrance to, public participation. In a society in which the status of women has traditionally depended on the status of their husbands, even women who must campaign and be elected to office on the basis of their own candidacies may find that they benefit directly or indirectly from the socioeconomic standing of their husbands. In addition, it is likely that many husbands encourage the political aspirations of their wives

Education. Husbands of women in office are as a group highly educated. Regardless of the office compared, a higher percentage of husbands than of their officeholding wives are college graduates.

Occupations. Consistent with their high education, the husbands of women officeholders have occupations of high status. The proportion who are professional or managerial ranges from 62% among husbands of municipal councilors and mayors to 88% among spouses of state senators. (Too few members of the state executive or Congress reported husband's occupation to allow analysis.) The occupations of husbands may function in at least three ways to facilitate the public activity of women in office. First, some husbands have occupations conventionally associated with access to political networks. For example, lawyers constitute from 4% of occupations reported for husbands by mayors and municipal councilors to 17% of those reported by state senators. Second, husbands may have high-income occupations that make resources available to women aspiring to office. For example, from 4% of municipal councilors to 12% of state senators reporting their husbands' occupations say they are married to physicians or dentists. Finally, husbands may have occupations flexible enough to permit activities supportive to wives seeking and serving in office. Substantial minorities of the husbands of women in office are self-employed professionals or businessmen, many of whom may have the autonomy to schedule their work in a manner that complements their wives' political activities.

Interest in politics. A question parallel to that asking about parental interest in politics was utilized to inquire whether the husbands of women in office are perceived as having high political interest. As a group, husbands are seen by their officeholding wives as having far higher levels of interest in politics than either parent. The proportion of husbands considered "very much interested" in politics, which increases consistently by level of office, ranges from 44% among municipal councilors to approximately 80% among state senators, members of the state executive and members of Congress (compare Table 5). The reported perceptions of husbands' interest in politics can be no more than a rough and indirect indicant of the support and encouragement that women in office receive from their husbands. Yet the data are not inconsistent with the idea that husbands of political women more often act as sources of support than as impediments to officeholding.

TABLE 15. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE GENERALLY PROSPEROUS BUT NOT WEALTHY--FAMILY INCOMES OF THE NONMARRIED ARE CONSIDERABLY LOWER

Family Income 1974	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
			%	%	%	%	%
Married							
under $10,000			2	3	4	12	10
$10,000-19,999		(1)	12	22	19	42	36
$20,000-29,999		(2)	28	33	40	25	31
$30,000-39,999	(1)	(4)	23	18	15	6	11
$40,000-49,999	(1)	(6)	12	11	8	5	5
$50,000 and over	(5)	(10)	23	13	14	10	7
Total	(7)	(23)	(43)	(218)	(171)	(189)	(1,417)
Unmarried							
under $10,000		(1)	(3)	34	45	51	45
$10,000-19,999		(5)	(8)	41	32	29	38
$20,000-29,999		(7)	(5)	13	15	12	12
$30,000-39,999		(2)	(2)	3	-	2	3
$40,000-49,999		(2)	(1)	3	3	4	-
$50,000 and over	(2)	(1)	(1)	6	5	2	2
Total	(2)	(18)	(20)	(70)	(59)	(79)	(459)

Family Income

The economic advantage enjoyed by married women officeholders is apparent from a comparison in Table 15 of the family income of married and unmarried women. The proportions of unmarried women in office whose incomes are under $10,000 are several times higher than the percentages of married officeholders with low incomes. Similarly, married officeholders are several times more likely to report high incomes of $50,000 or more.

The family incomes of married officeholders are higher than those of the unmarried, but they suggest economic comfort rather than wealth, even among the married.[16] At the local level, about half the married mayors and municipal councilors have family incomes of under $20,000; only 10% of mayors and 7% of councilors indicate incomes of $50,000 or more. The level of income rises with the level of officeholding, but the proportions with very high incomes is substantial only at levels where the salary of the office itself is a significant factor in the officeholder's family income.

Children

Just as the "typical" woman in office is married, she is also a mother--and a mother of as many children as other women her age. Since women in office tend to be middle-aged, however, we can expect that they are not, on the average, mothers of young children.

Number of children of officeholders. Table 16 describes the percentages of women in each office having a given number of children. Table 17 provides similar data within selected categories of mother's age for state legislators, county commissioners, mayors and municipal councilors. For purposes of comparison, Table 17 also supplies information on the number of children born to U.S. women in the selected age categories. There is no suggestion in these tables that officeholders have either forsaken or been deprived of motherhood. Except among younger state legislators, women in every office and in every age category are slightly less likely than U.S. women to be childless. They are equally as likely to have large families.

Only among younger state legislators is fertility comparatively low. These women have achieved a relatively high office at a young age, and their low fertility can possibly be interpreted as reflecting an incompatibility of motherhood with a political career. Since they are not yet past childbearing age, however, we may be witnessing delayed fertility rather than a low proclivity to motherhood. Younger state legislators may be following a pattern of early career and late motherhood.

Age of children. Although most women in office are mothers, the majority of officeholders appear to have no active childrearing responsibilities. Between 47% and 66% of each officeholding category report either that they have no children or that their youngest child is at least eighteen years of age. Examination of Table 18 reveals, however, that having young children does not preclude holding office. Substantial minorities, especially at the lower levels of office, have children under twelve.

If either the number of children or the age of children does inhibit participation in the polity, then--unless a radical restructuring of the family takes place--the future availability of American women for public life will depend upon their marital and fertility patterns. The decision to marry, age at marriage, number and spacing of children will all influence whether and at what age women enter politics.

Despite persuasive arguments, there is no strong evidence in support of the idea that children impede public participation, and a great deal of further research is required before the effects of family life on the public participation of women can be pinpointed. The

TABLE 16. MOST WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE MOTHERS, OFTEN OF LARGE FAMILIES

Number of Children	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	(6)	30	19	19	14	18	15
One	(3)	12	15	7	8	16	12
Two	(3)	25	22	29	28	23	27
Three	(3)	21	16	22	24	19	24
Four+	(2)	12	28	23	26	24	22
Total	(17)	(57)	(67)	(331)	(263)	(297)	(2,061)
Median Number	1.3	1.8	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.4

TABLE 17. OFFICEHOLDERS HAVE AS MANY CHILDREN AS OTHER WOMEN OF SIMILAR AGE[a]

Age of Mother and Number of Children	State Legis. %	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %	U.S. Pop. Women[b] %
20-34 years					(20% never married)
No children	67	32		25	18
One child	11	16		14	20
Two children	18	28		36	23
Three or more children	5	24		25	19
Total	(66)	(25)		(254)	
35-49 years					(5% never married)
No children	7	7	8	8	8
One child	6	6	19	8	10
Two children	31	28	22	27	23
Three or more children	56	59	51	57	54
Total	(154)	(116)	(107)	(888)	
50-59 years					(5% never married)
No children	5	10	13	10	12
One child	8	5	19	14	15
Two children	25	39	20	24	24
Three or more children	62	46	48	52	44
Total	(108)	(80)	(98)	(527)	

[a]Because of small numbers, mayors aged 20-34 years, members of the state executive and members of Congress have been omitted from the table. State senators and state representatives have been combined as members of the state legislature. Age categories are selected for comparability with current data published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

[b]Data are for June 1974. Source: Computed from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-20, No. 279 (March 1975), Table 12. Because the CPR presents the number of children only for women ever married, we have supplied the percentage never married in each age category. The vast majority of these have no children.

TABLE 18. LOW PROPORTIONS OF OFFICEHOLDERS HAVE YOUNG CHILDREN

Age of Youngest Child	U.S. House	State Exec. %	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %
Under 6 yr.	(2)	5	3	9	8	4	9
6-11 yr.	-	5	8	14	18	11	18
12-17 yr.	(3)	19	21	17	26	22	20
18+ yr.	(3)	36	46	38	33	44	37
Age not determined	(3)	5	3	3	1	1	1
No children	(6)	30	19	19	14	18	15
Total	(17)	(57)	(67)	(331)	(263)	(296)	(2,058)

older age of women in politics and the fact that they typically have no young children at home are often interpreted as evidence that childrearing prevents or delays political participation. Although such an inference is plausible, it is not the only reasonable one available. Middle-aged women commencing public activity are not likely to be mothers of young children, but this fact alone does not warrant the conclusion that young children cause avoidance of political roles. Perhaps women holding office are late entrants because they must undergo a more difficult and more lengthy process than men of gaining recognition from political parties and the electorate. If so, the age of their children may be an irrelevant concomitant of a path to officeholding marked by many years of service in the community, in the political parties, in the campaigns of others, or on the staffs of other officeholders.

We recognize that, for some women, the actual or potential opposition of their families may keep them out of politics. Yet those women who do hold office are not atypical in their familial roles. By suggesting that the family is not necessarily an impediment to women seeking office--and that in some circumstances it may be a political asset--we hope to direct attention to the way in which sex-role patterns of extrafamilial institutions may be equally or more important than the family in explaining the low public participation of women. As we examine the organizational ties and political characteristics of women officeholders in the sections to follow, we shall return to this issue.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The tendency for high levels of organizational and political activity to occur in the same people has long been noted in research on voluntary organizations. Women in office are no exception. The fact that politically active people tend to have numerous organizational ties is often interpreted as meaning that organizational activity is an antecedent of political activism, a route to officeholding. Alignment with others of common interest is said to facilitate the development of organizational and decision-making skills, of an interest in the larger society, of a conviction that action in the polity is efficacious, and of a constituency that supplies support for public office. Since women are less involved in occupational networks that might serve similar functions, the assertion is common that activity in voluntary organizations is an especially important background for women who would hold office.

Although the association of political and organizational activity has been observed repeatedly, the nature of the connection between them is not well documented. We don't know, for example, whether political activity and organizational participation occur together in the same people because organizational affiliation leads to political action, because political affiliations lead to involvement in organizations as a way of maintaining constituencies, or because political and nonpolitical public behavior are simultaneous expressions of a general motivation for public service. This issue cannot be settled empirically in the absence of careful longitudinal research. Until such research is done, we are limited to a description of the nature and types of female officials' organizational ties, and of how their affiliations may depend on other roles and characteristics.

Past research has shown that people who are active in one sphere tend to be generally active in other aspects of social life. Yet, since time is finite but demands on time are potentially unlimited, the common assumption is that people who commit themselves deeply to one role must limit other commitments. A special case of this assumption is that politically active women sacrifice other kinds of social participation. We have already seen in the preceding section that this is not true of family roles; officeholders differ little from other women in their family characteristics. Do they, then, limit organizational involvements once they achieve office? Or do they maintain a diverse set of role commitments that includes extensive affiliation with voluntary organizations?

Number of Organizational Memberships

We asked women in office to list their "current, active" memberships, and the number of these is shown in Table 19. In every office, more than 75% report at least one organizational membership, proportions notably higher than those found in recent surveys of the general population.[17] The number of memberships varies with the type of office held, tending to increase as the level of officeholding increases. The median ranges from 2.3 memberships among mayors to 4.9 among members of the state executive. Over 20% of state senators and executives claim active membership in nine or more organizations.

District population and number of organizations. Variations in the number of memberships are in part explained by the size of the district served. County commissioners, mayors and municipal councilors from districts with population under 10,000 belong to an average of 3.5, 1.8 and 2.2 organizations respectively. Median memberships of officials from larger districts are 4.3 among county commissioners, 3.5 among mayors, and 3.9 among municipal

councilors. This tendency to fewer memberships in smaller districts helps to account for the lower rate of organizational affiliation among mayors, who are most likely of all officeholders to serve districts of less than 10,000 population (see Table 4).

Conventional contrasts made between the sense of community in small towns or suburbs and what is often labeled the impersonality and social fragmentation of cities might lead one to expect higher levels of organizational affiliation in smaller places. However, it must be recognized that small communities may not support an elaborate organizational structure. At the local level, more than half of women officials serve districts of under 5,000 population. To the degree that organizational affiliations function to build and maintain the constituencies of officeholders, we would expect officials in larger districts to rely on organizational networks more than those in smaller districts, where greater opportunities for informal personal networks may exist.

Number of organizations and other roles. Our data, like those of past surveys of the U.S. population, support the observation that a high degree of activity in one sphere of life is not noticeably compensated by low activity in other spheres. Officeholders do not seem to curtail organizational activity as a way of balancing multiple roles. Married women in office have a slightly higher median number of memberships than the unmarried. Those with children average more memberships than those with no children, and the age of children has no effect on the number of affiliations. The employed are members of as many organizations as those not employed. In sum, women in office are highly active women, and those with husbands, children and jobs are as active or more active than those without these other role involvements.

Types of Membership

As revealed by Table 20, women in office do not confine their memberships to a few types. The wide range of organizational ties among officeholders includes not only groups traditionally associated with high levels of political action, such as political, occupational and community service groups, but also manifestly apolitical groups such as cultural, fraternal and hobby organizations.[18] Within this diversity, women officials belong in greatest numbers to political and occupational organizations.

That political organizations generally have the highest membership among women officeholders of any type of group is to be expected. To influence governmental decisions and processes, or to disseminate information about these, is the principal and manifest goal of political groups. These organizations form a diverse collection, including in their variety the League of Women Voters, National Organization for Women, Democratic and Republican Clubs, Common Cause or local citizen action groups. The finding that 82% of state senators are members of at least one such organization may be less surprising than that only 35% of mayors and 36% of municipal councilors belong. The relatively lower rates of political membership among local women officeholders reflect their lower general rates of organizational affiliation and the fact that many small communities have a limited number of organizations. Lesser involvement in political organizations may also point to less partisan political activity at the local level than at other governmental levels.

TABLE 19. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE JOINERS

Number of Current, Active Organizational Memberships	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
0	(6)	10	6	11	16	22	18
1	(2)	10	6	5	10	16	13
2	-	12	9	8	9	14	16
3	(1)	7	8	9	12	13	15
4	(4)	14	19	12	11	10	11
5	(1)	9	9	10	11	6	11
6	-	7	9	13	6	6	5
7	(1)	5	3	8	5	4	4
8	-	4	8	7	6	3	2
9 or more	(2)	22	23	17	14	6	6
Total	(17)	(57)	(67)	(331)	(263)	(297)	(2,061)
Median Number of Memberships	3	4.9	4.7	4.2	3.8	2.3	2.7

TABLE 20. WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE MEMBERS OF A WIDE RANGE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Member of at Least One Organization in the Category	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Major-alty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Political (e.g., LWV, Democratic or Republican Clubs)	(5)	46	82	72	58	35	36
Professional and Business	(7)	67	57	47	40	37	34
Labor Unions	-	2	-	2	3	2	1
Farm	-	-	-	5	2	1	1
Youth-School Service (e.g., PTA, Girl Scouts)	(1)	21	19	28	30	22	29
School (e.g., AAUW, Alumnae Associations)	(2)	26	22	21	12	10	10
General Service (e.g., Lions, Rotary, Zonta)	-	10	18	14	18	9	9
Special Service (e.g., Cancer Society, Sierra Club)	(4)	26	43	45	32	30	28
Cultural-Aesthetic (e.g., Historical Society)	(1)	10	13	18	22	15	18
Church-related	(1)	4	8	9	8	7	8
Fraternal (e.g., social sororities, OES)	(4)	28	18	16	12	22	17
Ethnic-Nationality	(2)	7	6	5	4	3	2
Hobby	(1)	16	33	25	27	24	27
Total	(17)	(57)	(67)	(331)	(263)	(297)	(2,061)

From 35% of municipal councilwomen to a high of 67% of those serving in state executive positions belong to business and professional organizations such as the National Educational Association, Business and Professional Women's Club, National Federal of Licensed Practical Nurses or similarly job-related associations. Past research indicates a connection between membership in occupational organizations and a high degree of political interest and activity, but the nature of this connection is not immediately apparent. A large and powerful professional or business organization may constitute a political base at state and national levels. However, that job-related organizations function similarly at local levels is doubtful. Given the fact that local officials are more often employed than are officeholders at other levels of government, their rates of membership in business and professional groups are not especially high.

Women's Organizations

Membership in women's organizations is classified into five types: feminist social action groups, whose principal aim is to bring about change in the status of women; general service, reform or social action groups, whose social aims may include the status of women but are focused primarily on other issues and activities; professional and business organizations; women's partisan political groups; other women's organizations such as sororities, social clubs or women's auxiliaries. The proportions belonging to at least one organization of a given type are shown in Table 21. Mirroring general differences in the number of organizational ties, state legislators tend to have higher percentages of members in all but one category of women's organizations. The exception is the "other" category, in which the proportion of members is approximately equal among officeholders at differing levels of government. Women officeholders at all levels are less likely to be members of feminist social action groups than of any other type of women's organization. Although the women's movement may be--and probably is--encouraging women to seek office, the vast majority of women in office are not organizationally affiliated with any group whose principal concern is women's rights.

District Size and Types of Affiliation

Consistent with their generally lower rates of organizational affiliation, officeholders serving smaller districts have lower percentages of membership in women's organizations classified as feminist, professional, service and political. However, they are slightly more likely to belong to other women's groups.

Among the types of organizations listed in Table 20, lower proportions of women serving districts with populations under 10,000 belong to political, professional, service, school and youth groups.[19] They are similar to officeholders from larger districts in their involvement in union, farm, cultural, church, fraternal, ethnic and hobby groups. Thus women serving small districts have lower percentages of membership principally in those types of organizations indicated by past research to be most closely associated with political activity.[20] This pattern reinforces our contention that small and large districts differ in the part played by organizations to develop political constituencies.

Age, Term of Office and Organizational Ties

If a "new breed" of political woman is coming into office, as some have asserted, we might expect this pattern to be manifest in the organizational ties of younger women and/or of women in their first term of office. However, few differences by age or term of office are apparent in our data. The average number of memberships is approximately equal across categories of age and term, with only a very slight tendency for the middle-aged, from 40-54 years, to have a higher median number of memberships.

Younger women in office are marginally more likely to be members of feminist organizations and are slightly less likely than their older colleagues to belong to other types of women's groups, but these differences are quite small. Younger women do have higher involvement in school and youth-related groups, but this is a predictable life cycle phenomenon. They also have lower membership in fraternal organizations than do older officeholders. This age difference replicates the findings of recent analysis of national surveys and apparently indicates a general trend of declining interest in such organizations, many of which are sororities or auxiliaries of male groups.[21] The only difference by term of office is that both younger and older state legislators in their first term are less likely than those serving a second or higher term to belong to business or professional organizations. Thus, although one or two findings can be noted that may imply the existence of a new type of woman in politics, on balance younger officeholders and those in their first term of office exhibit patterns of organizational affiliation similar to the memberships of their older or more experienced colleagues.

In reviewing the organizational ties of women in office, we find patterns at once distinctive and similar to other women. Officeholders have far higher levels of organizational activity and an unusual degree of involvement in political, occupational or service groups--types of organizations that are commonly associated with high levels of political activity. Similar to women in general, the married and those with children have higher rates of membership. And like other women, officeholders have relatively little involvement in feminist organizations.

The clearest distinctions in numbers and patterns of affiliations are those between women from small and large districts and those among officeholders at differing governmental levels. These differences suggest that the political functions of organizational ties may be more important in the more populous places and at higher levels of officeholding. If so, patterns of organizational affiliation may reflect a general duality in the character of political office. As we examine in the next section the political characteristics of officeholders and the nature of the offices

TABLE 21. RELATIVELY LOW PROPORTIONS OF WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE MEMBERS OF FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS--STATE LEGISLATORS ARE HIGHEST IN FEMINIST MEMBERSHIP

Member of at Least One Women's Organization in the Category	U.S. House	State Exec. %	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %	Mayoralty %	Munic. Council %
Feminist-Social Action (e.g., NOW, WEAL, WPC)	(1)	14	22	24	12	6	6
Service, Reform, General Social Action (e.g., LWV, AAUW, Soroptomist)	(3)	18	49	39	28	18	19
Professional and Business (e.g., BPW, National Secretaries Association)	(4)	32	39	31	16	18	13
Women's Political (e.g., Democratic or Republican Women's Club)	(2)	23	34	36	25	16	14
Other Women's (e.g., Women's Clubs, Social Sororities, OES)	(4)	32	30	31	28	36	33
Total	(17)	(57)	(67)	(331)	(263)	(297)	(2,061)

they occupy, we shall consider this duality in more detail.

V. POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

This section focuses on the tenure in office, party ties, officeholding experience, salary, time devoted to official activity, and committee assignments of elected officials. Our description will at several points touch on two related issues. First, we have seen that women in office are a tiny proportion of officeholders. The fact that they are concentrated in small districts implies that even this small proportion exists at the fringes of political power in the United States. Do the political characteristics of officeholders reinforce this implication? Second, our examination of the characteristics of women in office to this point indicates that, except for their higher socioeconomic status and high levels of organizational activity, they reflect in their other roles the general position of women in society. Do these other roles seem related to their performance in office?

Number of Terms in Office

Except in Congress and the state executive, the majority of women in office are newcomers, serving in their first term (see Table 22). This tendency is especially marked in county and municipal bodies, where approximately two-thirds are first-termers and where only about 10% have tenure of more than two terms.

Whether such brief incumbency represents abnormal turnover in office relative to male officials, and/or whether it reflects striking increments in numbers of women entering political life is unclear from the data at hand. However, documented increases in the numbers of state legislators lend support to the latter interpretation. Between 1972 and 1975, the number of women in state legislatures rose from 344 to 611, an increase of 78%. If the preponderance of newcomers signals a rising trend of political participation by women, then for some time to come we can expect to find the majority of women officials serving their first term.

Party Ties

Reflecting recent trends in the U.S., women in office are far more likely to be Democrats than Republicans. As indicated by Table 23, Democrats outnumber Republicans in every office, among those reporting party affiliation. There is a slight tendency for the proportion of Democrats to rise as the level of office rises, from 51% Democrat among municipal councilors to a high of 64% in the state executive and about

TABLE 22. THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN IN OFFICE ARE SERVING IN THEIR FIRST TERM

Term in Office	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
			%	%	%	%	%
1st term	(9)	(11)	62	51	68	64	66
2nd term	(6)	(6)	24	28	21	23	25
3rd term or higher	(4)	(6)	14	21	11	13	9
Total	(19)	(23)[a]	(78)	(402)	(260)	(285)	(2,002)

[a]Small number reflects the fact that many state executive positions are appointive.

TABLE 23. DEMOCRATS OUTNUMBER REPUBLICANS IN EVERY OFFICE

Party	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrat	(14)	64	59	53	59	53	51
Republican	(5)	22	31	37	33	36	37
Independent[a]	-[b]	8	1	-	7	10	12
Other[a]	-	6	8	9	1	-	-
Total	(19)	(63)	(86)	(478)	(257)	(286)	(1,987)

[a]The degree of de facto major party affiliation may be slightly underreported because some respondents, in states requiring no party registration, either did not indicate party affiliation or classified themselves as Independent or Other.

[b]Indicates none or less than .5%.

three-fourths in the U.S. House of Representatives. Only members of state houses differ in this trend, probably because of the large number of legislators from traditionally Republican New Hampshire.

Those in their first term of office serve to underscore this asymmetry in party ties among women in office. First-termers are even less apt than those serving a second or higher term to declare themselves Republicans (Table 24). Younger women, whether in their first or higher term, are also less likely to be Republican.

Offices held in party. Party affiliation does not, of course, indicate whether officeholders are active within their parties, or how important the party may have been for attaining office. At the local level, relatively small minorities hold or have held party positions such as county committeeperson, precinct leader, or convention delegate (Table 25). Party activity may be less important to election at the local level because of the prevalence of nonpartisan elections. Among those reporting, 63% of municipal councilors and 69% of mayors say their election to office was nonpartisan and they did not run as a party candidate.

Except at the local level, substantial proportions of officeholders either currently hold party office or have done so in the past. Still, the data in Table 25 make clear that attainment of governmental office is by no means fused to holding formal positions within political parties. In every office except Congress, at least half have never served in a party position, either electoral or appointive.

Former Officeholding

The fact that most women in office are newcomers does not necessarily mean that they are inexperienced politicians. They have a possible history of incumbency of other governmental offices or of offices within their political parties. Yet the data reveal that large proportions of women currently in office have no former officeholding experience of any kind.

Women in office were asked to list, in addition to former elective or appointive party positions, all former governmental offices, elective or appointive. The data in Table 26 refer to those who held, in the past, a particular type of office at any level: federal, state, county or local.

TABLE 24. THE PREDOMINANCE OF DEMOCRATS IS HIGHER AMONG WOMEN IN THEIR FIRST TERM OF OFFICE

Party	U.S. House[a]		State Exec.[a]		State Senate		State House		County Comsn.		Mayoralty		Munic. Council	
	Term		Term		Term		Term		Term		Term		Term	
	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+	1st	2nd+
					%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrat	(4)	(10)	(8)	(9)	68	50	64	48	61	53	54	49	53	48
Republican	(3)	(2)	(2)	(3)	30	37	32	43	30	40	34	42	35	41
Independent[b]	-[c]	-	(1)	-	2	-	-	1	8	5	12	9	12	11
Other[b]	-	-	-	-	-	13	4	8	1	2	-	-	-	-
Total	(7)	(12)	(11)	(12)	(47)	(30)	(200)	(192)	(172)	(81)	(176)	(101)	(1284)	(666)

[a]Because the totals are too small for meaningful percentages, figures are reported as absolute numbers. The small numbers of state executives are explained by the fact that many of these are appointed officials, with indefinite terms of office.

[b]The degree of de facto major party affiliation may be slightly underreported because some respondents, in states requiring no party registration, either did not indicate party affiliation or classified themselves as Independent or Other.

[c]Indicates none or less than .5%.

TABLE 25. THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN IN OFFICE HAVE NOT HELD POSITIONS WITHIN A POLITICAL PARTY

Past or Current Party Position	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayoralty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Neither past nor current	(6)	58	53	50	57	78	75
Past position(s) only	(8)	30	23	24	21	10	12
Current position(s) only	(3)	7	14	16	14	8	9
Both current and past positions	(2)	4	10	10	8	4	4
Total	(19)	(69)	(88)	(494)	(264)	(300)	(2,064)

Former elective office. The extent of former elective officeholding depends upon the office now held, though in no case have as many as half held prior office. Former elective office is more common in the highest offices and among state senators and mayors, where current office may represent a logical step up from state houses and municipal councils respectively. Very few, from 7% to 16%, of municipal councilors, county commissioners, or state representatives have previously served in elective office.

Former appointive office. Except among incumbents of county and municipal governing bodies, experience in appointive office is less than electoral experience. In all cases, the proportions having served in appointive positions are relatively low, reaching a maximum among state executives (many of whom have also been appointed to their current offices). Since the women in our study are nearly all incumbents of elective offices, however, the lack of appointive experience may not be representative of all women in public life.

Former party offices. The suggestion has often been made that women in office, relative to their male colleagues, have weak ties to the parties. In the absence of direct comparison with male officials, this issue cannot be settled by our data. If women have relatively little experience with party office, it is to some degree only a reflection of their generally low level of past officeholding experience of any kind.

An examination of the percentages who have held party positions in the past, as shown in Table 26, suggests that patterns of party ties may be quite complex and may depend heavily on the type of office being analyzed. In four of the seven categories of office--among Congresswomen, state representatives, county commissioners and municipal councilors--the proportions having held some type of party office exceed the percentages for either elective or appointive past governmental office. The opposite is true of state executives, state senators and mayors.

Past party offices are notably less frequent among officials at the local level, perhaps--as noted above--reflecting the prevalence of nonpartisan elections. Another reason for low partisan involvement at the municipal level may be the prevailing small size of election districts represented by women in local office. Personal visibility in smaller districts may lessen the need for reliance on organizational ties.

Holding any former office of any kind. The political experience of women in office may be underestimated if one considers only the proportions having held each type of office separately. As Table 27 shows, sizable percentages of women have served in at least one of three major types--elective governmental, appointive governmental, or party (either elective or appointive). Although the proportions having some kind of past office are larger than the percentages for any single type alone, past

TABLE 26. LARGE PROPORTIONS OF WOMEN HAVE NO FORMER OFFICEHOLDING EXPERIENCE

At Least One Former:	U.S. House	State Exec. %	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %
Elective office	(7)	44	48	16	15	31	7
Appointive office	(4)	28	19	12	16	14	15
Party position	(10)	35	33	34	29	13	16
Total	(19)	(69)	(88)	(494)	(265)	(300)	(2,062)

TABLE 27. FEW OFFICEHOLDERS HAVE EXPERIENCE IN MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF OFFICE

Types of Past Officeholding Experience	U.S. House	State Exec. %	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %
Elective government or appointive government or party position							
None	(6)	35	26	50	53	52	68
One	(7)	29	52	38	35	37	26
Two	(4)	32	17	11	10	10	5
Three	(2)	4	5	1	2	1	1
Total	(19)	(69)	(88)	(494)	(265)	(300)	(2,062)

officeholding exceeds 50% only among state senators, state executives, and members of Congress. Moreover, few women at any level of office have had a variety of past experience; the overwhelming majority have experience with only one kind of office or with none.

Age, term of office and former officeholding. Are there signs that women may be coming into office with types of experience that represent a break with past patterns? The answer is a highly qualified yes. Those in their first term of office are less likely than those with longer tenure to have served previously in elective office, but this finding occurs because women in their first term are younger. Younger women, whether or not they are in their first term of office, display less aggregate experience with elective office. Thus it is age, rather than time of entering office, that is associated with past elective experience. No clear variations by age or term of office appear to characterize other types of officeholding experience.[23]

District population and former officeholding. At the county and local levels, the proportions with experience of each or any type of prior office are lower in the smaller districts. This finding suggests that what may matter to the electorate is not previous political experience but whether the candidate has had an opportunity to become known, either personally or by reputation. In the smaller communities, women aspiring to office may easily become acquainted with a large proportion of the electorate. In the larger urban centers, however, it is likely that individuals must rely on occupational identity, organizational ties and political activity to achieve visibility, both among the electorate and among the power brokers whose support is essential.

Characteristics of Office

As we move from a description of the officeholder--of her roles and political experience --to a consideration of the office she holds, a number of the characteristics of the women who serve become more understandable. If women in office often differ little from other women, if they lack the experience and occupational credentialing often associated with professional politicians, they may do so because by and large they are not professionals. Except at the higher levels of office and in the larger districts, women in office are voluntary politicians. Having low or no salaries and part-time hours, their offices more nearly approach the voluntary positions in which women have traditionally served than the full-time, well-paid positions of power called to mind by "big city politics."

Salary of office. Among those reporting the salary they earn as officeholders, nearly one-fourth of mayors and councilors say they receive no salary from their office (Table 28). Approximately two-fifths are paid under $1,000 annually, and a number of others receive token per diem payments for each session they attend. The percentages earning $5,000 a year or more are tiny: 5% of mayors and 3% of municipal councilors. Even among members of county governing bodies and state legislatures, only about half earn $5,000 or more annually. Thus, it is only members of the state executive and Congresswomen who typically earn what could be considered full-time salaries. Congresspersons, as is well known, earned $44,600 per year in 1975. Members of the state executive typically reported salaries of $25,000 or more.

Predictably, the low salaries of officeholders reflect the small populations of their districts. Table 29 shows the contrast, among state representatives, county commissioners and local officials, between the salaries earned by those from districts with populations under 10,000 and the salaries of officeholders from the larger districts. The contrast is striking; those in the smaller districts earn considerably less.[24]

TABLE 28. AT LOCAL LEVELS A MAJORITY RECEIVE UNDER $1,000 OR NO SALARY FROM THEIR OFFICE

Salary	U.S. House	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
		%	%	%	%	%	%
None	-	-	-	-	2	24	24
Under $1,000	-	-	9	29	7	40	37
$1,000-4,999	-	-	19	15	30	27	24
$5,000-9,999	-	-	37	25	26	3	2
$10,000-14,999	-	-	12	12	13	1	-
$15,000-19,999	-	14	3	4	6	1	-
$20,000-24,999	-	30	4	2	3	-	-
$25,000 and over	(19)	56	-	-	-	-	-
Per diem	-	-	16	13	3	4	13
Total	(19)	(44)	(68)	(355)	(254)	(279)	(1,986)

TABLE 29. SMALLER DISTRICTS HAVE LOWER SALARIES OF OFFICE

	State House District Pop.		County Comsn. District Pop.		Mayoralty District Pop.		Munic. Council District Pop.	
Salary	under 10,000 %	over 10,000 %	under 10,000 %	over 10,000 %	under 10,000 %	over 10,000 %	under 10,000 %	over 10,000 %
None	-	-	5	-	28	9	28	12
Under $1,000	64	6	10	5	46	17	43	24
$1,000-4,999	11	18	47	16	20	53	13	49
$5,000-9,999	11	34	15	33	1	9	-	6
$10,000 and over	1	28	2	40	1	7	-	5
Per diem	13	14	21	6	4	5	16	4
Total	(74)	(215)	(105)	(137)	(218)	(58)	(1,345)	(530)

TABLE 30. HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO OFFICE ACTIVITY RISE AS THE LEVEL OF OFFICE RISES

Hours/Week Spent in Work of Office	U.S. House %	State Exec. %	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %	Mayor-alty %	Munic. Council %
Under 10		-	7	2	10	17	46
10-19		-	7	5	16	30	26
20-29		-	8	10	19	23	15
30-39		2	3	10	17	11	6
40-49		27	14	16	17	10	4
50-59		31	15	22	11	4	1
60 and above	(10)	40	46	35	10	5	2
Total	(10)	(45)	(59)	(285)	(241)	(262)	(1,823)
Median hours per week	91	55	50	50	30	20	10

Number of hours devoted to office. Women officials were asked to "estimate the number of hours per week that you devote to the work of your current elective or appointive office(s)." An examination of their answers reveals anew the dual nature of officeholding: the highly demanding, full-time positions in the larger cities and at higher levels of office versus the part-time work in the bulk of offices occupied by women, in the smaller places and at lower levels of government. As seen by Table 30, although the range is quite wide for most offices, the median number of hours devoted to office increases markedly as the level of office increases. On the average, municipal councilors spend a mere 10 hours weekly in office-related work; Congresswomen claim more than 90 hours.

The number of hours per week devoted to office turns out to be a fairly sensitive indicator of other aspects of officeholding and of the way in which nonpolitical activities in the lives of officials are (or are not) associated with varying investments of time in political office. Utilizing medians as a measure of the "average," we have examined the hours per week devoted to office within varying categories of district population, age, term of office, employment status, marital status and age of youngest child.[25]

Hours and district population. The greatest discriminator of hours devoted to office is the size of the district population that the officeholder serves. As Table 31 dramatically reveals, those from districts over 25,000 population spend two to four times the number of hours at their offices as are spent by those in the small districts.

Hours, age and term of office. There is a small but consistent decline in hours among those aged 55 and over (Table 32). Those in their first term of office and more experienced officeholders devote, on the average, the same amount of time to their offices; no more than one hour per week distinguishes the medians within any category of office.

Hours and employment status. Employed women clearly devote fewer hours to office than the nonemployed (Table 33). Obviously, the process underlying this finding cannot be evaluated from the data. Perhaps employed women cannot afford to seek any but the less demanding

offices. Or perhaps they are identified primarily with their occupations and look upon officeholding as appropriately only a spare-time activity. Since officials from smaller districts are more likely both to have outside employment and to spend less time in office activity, it would appear that many employed women, whatever the underlying reason, occupy offices less demanding of their time than women who are not employed.

TABLE 31. OFFICEHOLDERS IN SMALLER DISTRICTS DEVOTE FEWER HOURS TO OFFICE

Median No. Hours/ Week in Districts of Population:	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
Under 1,000	-[a]	13 (111)	4 (458)
1,000-4,999	20 (54)	20 (63)	8 (527)
5,000-9,999	24 (34)	24 (26)	12 (236)
10,000-24,999	35 (33)	28 (35)	18 (249)
25,000 and over	40 (98)	40 (22)	23 (256)

[a]Number too small for tabulation.

TABLE 32. OLDER WOMEN SPEND SLIGHTLY FEWER HOURS IN OFFICEHOLDING ACTIVITY[a]

Median No. Hours/Week Among Ages:	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
19-39 years	50 (86)	30 (63)	18 (36)	10 (468)
40-54 years	50 (128)	35 (124)	20 (132)	10 (854)
55 years +	48 (60)	25 (48)	15 (89)	8 (444)

[a]Because of numbers too small for analysis, members of Congress, the state executive and state senate are omitted.

TABLE 33. THE EMPLOYED DEVOTE FEWER HOURS TO ACTIVITIES OF OFFICE[a]

Median Hours/ Week in Office if:	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
Employed full time	40 (32)	12 (30)	14 (93)	8 (687)
Employed part time	48 (40)	24 (35)	15 (29)	10 (326)
Not employed	50 (203)	35 (169)	25 (130)	15 (754)

[a]Because of numbers too small for analysis, members of Congress, the state executive and state senate are omitted.

Hours and family status. Contrary to what is often assumed, married women give equal or greater amounts of time to their offices than do unmarried women (Table 34). One explanation for this may be that a sizable proportion of the unmarried are widows and, therefore, somewhat older. However, the possibility presents itself that husbands, though they may require a certain amount of care and attention, on balance contribute support and services that operate to free their wives for greater political commitments. (Not the least of these contributions may be the higher family income typical of married couples.)

There is no clear and consistent evidence that the presence or age of children affects the amount of activity in office. Although child-rearing responsibilities are sometimes offered as the reason why so few women seek political office, it would appear that mothers who have achieved office do not lessen their political commitment relative to other women in similar offices (Table 34).

Committee assignments. Women in office were asked whether "you hold membership on (or act as liaison to) any committees, boards or commissions as an assignment of your office." As many as three such assignments were counted and grouped into nineteen areas of governmental function. Table 35 describes the percentage of state senators, state representatives and county commissioners naming an assignment within a given area, among those naming at least one assignment.[26]

Although women are found on committees in most of the areas listed, they are concentrated heavily in a few types. For the most part, these are the health, education, welfare and "good government" committees that have been pointed to in the past as the special governmental concerns of women. However, the proportions of state legislators on financial committees are also relatively high, as is the percentage in planning at the county level. Women are moderately concentrated on law and law enforcement. These areas traditionally have been considered the exclusive preserves of men.

At the other extreme, even the few women who do serve in state and county government are largely absent from committees dealing with business regulation, cultural arts, public utilities, housing, economic and industrial development, parks and recreation, public safety, and public works. They are found only marginally in

natural resources, transportation, labor and manpower, and environmental protection.

Not all of the governmental areas in which few women serve are traditionally male, a fact that signals caution in interpreting a national distribution within which there may be wide state-by-state variations in the level of government responsible for functions, and in the structures and names of committees designed to deal with specified areas. Although few officials at county and state levels serve on committees dealing with parks and recreation or cultural arts, municipal officials are heavily concentrated in these areas.

To the degree that committee assignments may reflect a traditional sexual division of labor, the issue arises of whether this differentiation occurs by preference or by discrimination. When one considers that the occupational backgrounds of women in office lean heavily in the direction of traditional female occupations, it seems plausible to suggest that their committee assignments reflect the special skills and training that they bring to their offices.

Through the committee assignments of women in office and the amount of time they devote to office, we have been able to gain some insight into one of the two issues posed at the beginning of this section: whether the other roles of women in office are related to their performance in office. The evidence is mixed and certainly deserves further investigation. First, some clues point to more than a chance correspondence between the committees on which they sit and their occupational backgrounds. Whether the distribution of committee assignments occurs because of the preferences of officeholders or because they are stereotypically discriminated against is not apparent in our data. Second, women who are employed give less time than the nonemployed to their offices. However, whether this reduced political commitment occurs out of some need to lessen strains of multiple role playing, or whether it simply reflects the part-time and unpaid nature of the political offices more widely available to women is again not entirely clear. Finally, contrary to common assumptions that families are a barrier to performance in office, marriage and children have no effect on the amount of time devoted to office. Though examination of the process by which this occurs is outside the scope of our report, the hypothesis arises for further study that the family operates to facilitate, not to hinder, political commitment.

We also asked at the beginning of this section whether women in office typically serve at the fringes of political power. All signs point to a conclusion that they do. Two kinds of offices emerge in our data: the professional and the voluntary.

On the one hand are the offices held by a minority, offices at the higher levels of government and in the more populous districts. Offering more than a nominal salary to their incumbents, these offices have the characteristics of professional occupations. Women entering them have higher education than other officeholders, more active organizational lives, are more active within their political parties and more often have had some kind of officeholding experience. Once in office, they devote full time to their official activities and have no outside employment or only

TABLE 34. MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON THE AMOUNT OF TIME DEVOTED TO OFFICE[a]

Median Hours/Week Devoted to Office by Marital Status, by Age Youngest Child	State Exec.	State Senate	State House	County Comsn.	Mayor-alty	Munic. Council
Marital Status						
Married	58 (22)	50 (38)	50 (217)	30 (178)	20 (188)	10 (1,373)
Unmarried	50 (23)	50 (21)	50 (67)	26 (62)	15 (71)	8 (442)
Age of Youngest Child						
No children	51 (12)	60 (13)	60 (51)	25 (31)	18 (44)	10 (256)
18+ years	50 (18)	60 (27)	50 (108)	30 (81)	15 (114)	10 (662)
12-17 years	-[b]	50 (12)	50 (52)	35 (64)	25 (62)	10 (373)
Under 12 years	-	-	50 (69)	30 (63)	20 (40)	10 (508)

[a]Members of Congress omitted because numbers too small for analysis.

[b]Numbers too small for analysis.

part-time employment.

On the other hand, the majority of women in office serve in what we call voluntary offices. Unpaid or only tokenly salaried, these offices are in the smaller districts and are concentrated at the lower levels of government. Women may enter them with less formal education and with little or no political experience. Their incumbents typically devote only part time to officeholding, often remaining employed full time in addition to holding office.

Although the importance and even the power of an office can be measured by criteria other than the size of the population it serves, whether it is highly paid, whether it requires a full-time commitment, or whether it is occupied principally by educated and politically experienced people, we suspect that the characteristics of what we have called the voluntary political office combine to make it one of little power. Are voluntary offices relatively more available to women because they are less powerful? Or do women enter them in

TABLE 35. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS ARE CONCENTRATED IN A FEW AREAS[a]

Governmental Area of Committee Assignment(s)[b]	State Senate %	State House %	County Comsn. %
Public or governmental administration and organization (e.g., merit system, legislative reorganization, personnel)	48	53	40
Finance, taxation, appropriations, budgeting, purchasing	31	17	11
Welfare, community affairs, human services (incl. special populations such as youth, elderly, women, migrants, minorities)	30	22	44
Education	27	25	6
Health and mental health	19	18	40
Law and law enforcement (incl. civil rights, criminal and juvenile justice, corrections, judicial nominations)	14	15	11
Natural resources (coal, oil, water, gas)	11	8	3
Transportation (highways, roads, airports, bridges, motor vehicle, railroad, other mass transit)	11	9	7
Labor and manpower (human resources, employment, workman's compensation, unemployment, labor relations--excludes government employment)	9	8	8
Environmental protection (conservation, fish and wildlife, flood control, erosion control, pollution control)	9	11	7
Business regulation (e.g., insurance, banking, alcohol, laboratories)	8	5	2
Cultural arts and beautification (e.g., libraries, museums, landmark preservation, Bicentennial)	8	3	7
Planning (land use, reclamation, zoning and adjustment)	5	10	32
Public utilities (electric, gas, telephone, water, etc.)	3	1	1
Housing	3	1	3
Economic and industrial development	-[c]	4	4
Parks and recreation	-	1	7
Public safety (fire, police, ambulance, disaster control, civil defense, traffic safety)	-	4	7
Public works and buildings	-	-	5
Total Officeholders	(64)[d]	(348)[d]	(209)[d]

[a]For explanation of offices omitted from this table, see footnote 26 to text.

[b]A maximum of three assignments per officeholder are counted.

[c]Indicates none or less than .5%.

[d]Percentages add to more than 100% because each officeholder could name more than one assignment.

proportionately greater numbers because they are more compatible than professional political offices with conventional women's roles? Or are women more numerous in voluntary political offices simply because such offices are more numerous and contain the majority of men as well as the majority of women in office? Additional research is sorely needed to address this important issue.

VI. CONCLUSION

Women are not well integrated with the political life of the nation. The number of women active in the polity is small. The few women who do hold office are found most frequently in positions with little potential for affecting broad segments of the population. This imbalance in the social participation of women should be corrected. Two broad sets of interacting conditions affect the eventual outcome. The first includes the number and characteristics of women who are potential candidates for public life; the second includes the structural barriers and opportunities for women presented by the political system itself.

Needed Research

Our survey of women in office has led to some inferences about the first of these conditions; the second remains almost wholly uninvestigated. If the relation of women to the polity is to be better understood, both areas require a great deal of additional study. Even at the fundamental starting point of counting the proportions of offices filled by women, we require better data. For elective offices, we have made the best count available. However, unless governmental agencies at state or federal levels undertake the task of ascertaining on a regular and uniform basis the numbers and kinds of offices and incumbents within each state, many areas of uncertainty will remain. Uncertainty is greatest regarding local offices, for which there may be no reporting requirements to state agencies, and for appointive offices, for which in some states no central listing exists even for state-level appointments.

In order to discover more about the nature of the women who enter public office, we need a comparative study of men. At many points in our report, we have indicated that we are unable to distinguish characteristics especially applicable to women from those generally true of officeholders, male or female. Until this can be done on a scale large enough to permit confidence in the research findings, we risk misinterpretation of the processes that result in so few women in public life.

Careful and controlled comparisons between women who serve in public office and politically inactive women are also needed. Women in office are a select group in some ways but similar to the mass of women in others. By comparing officeholders with women in otherwise similar situations who do not hold office, can we discover any critical differences that lead to officeholding for some of these women? What part is played by chance exposure to political opportunities?

Institutions outside the family may influence the participation of women in the polity. We need to study the connections between the type of formal education received by women and their perceptions of whether political life is relevant to them. Is the structure of occupations such that working men and women have differential access to political networks and institutions? If so, what changes in the education and occupation of women are likely to lead to greater public activity?

The poor representation of women in politics may not be understood solely from a study of women and their characteristics. Political processes must also be examined, for they may operate to exclude women. Are women received within their political parties in a way that would permit their qualifications for candidacy to be recognized? Does the electorate judge the qualifications of female candidates in the same manner as those of males? Are women who aspire to office able to attract the necessary funds and campaign workers? Is it true, as is often asserted, that women receive the nominations of their parties most often when the party feels it cannot win the election? Do women who achieve office find the same opportunities for effective leadership as their male colleagues?

Are women in politics excluded from important informal political networks? Such questions imply a sex-role patterning within the political sphere that operates to exclude those women who do aspire to office and to discourage others from making the attempt.

Finally, to understand the processes determining the political life of women, we must conduct studies of change. We suspect that the cogent determination of the number and kinds of women in the polity lies in their general societal position. Therefore, to understand women's political roles, we must monitor carefully the changes affecting women in a number of institutional spheres and the impact of such changes on the polity.

A review of the numerous and often disparate research findings emerging from our broad survey of women in office suggests a few general points that deserve reiteration and that may help to guide future research emphases. The diverse characteristics of women in office today imply that the underlying reasons for the

paucity of women in public life are multifaceted and not traceable to any single individual characteristic or social institution.

Voluntary and Professional Patterns

The fact that women who serve in public office are heavily concentrated in small districts offers clues to current barriers to officeholding. What we have termed in Part V the voluntary pattern characterizes officeholding in small districts. Women in these districts typically devote only a few hours per week to unsalaried positions. Compared with officeholders in larger districts, they have higher levels of outside employment, less formal education, lower family income, fewer organizational ties, less involvement in political parties, less past officeholding experience and longer years of residence in the community.

The professional pattern of officeholding, described in the preceding section, is the converse of the voluntary pattern. This pattern may help us understand the relative absence of women from government in urbanized areas. Significant increases in the number of women officeholders may well depend upon increases in the proportions of women having characteristics associated with office in urban governments.

In making the voluntary-professional distinction among officeholders, we highlight one significant aspect of women's current officeholding. While the extent of women's "voluntary" participation in government outside the more populous districts is noteworthy, the heavy concentration of women in such areas does not imply that they are equal participants. Even in the small districts, the representation of women is very low. Nonetheless, there is almost no female representation in areas with large populations. As a consequence, the participation of women in their own governance is even lower than implied by the tiny proportions of offices filled by women in all types of districts. The slight tendency for women in their first term to have been elected from somewhat larger districts must be viewed, therefore, as an encouraging sign.

Political Women and Other Women

Our data do not give strong support to the common assumption that "political woman" is a special type of person clearly distinguished from other women in the population. Women in office have relatively high socioeconomic status, a condition that facilitates leadership of all types but does not supply insight into the process by which only a small minority even of highly educated and economically prosperous women enter public life. Officeholders are more active in organizations that the population at large, especially in organizations of a more public nature, but this finding is at base a restatement of the meaning of holding office: women in office are active in public affairs. Women in office are older than other women, a characteristic of leaders generally but one which may be especially true of women. Concomitantly, their children are older, but whether there is a direct connection between age of children and entry into or avoidance of officeholding is not clear. Women in office also appear to have a high degree of residential stability, having typically lived 20 or more years in the same community. If the process by which women currently enter politics requires many years of gaining recognition as a viable candidate, then the older age of women in office is simply a summary statement of this process.

In several important ways women in office are not easily distinguished from other women. The fact that their parents showed no unusual degree of interest in politics while they were growing up raises the question of whether they experienced a special kind of political socialization. They participate in the labor force to the same degree as other women. Large proportions of officeholders have occupations traditionally identified with women. Their marital statuses form the same profile as that exhibited by women in the U.S. population. They have the same number of children as other women their age.

Contrary to deeply rooted assumptions, our data also supply no unequivocal evidence that the family constitutes an interference with political life. It would be valuable to study the indirect effects of family roles on the possibility of political careers. Women who opt for marriage and children at ages typical for U.S. society may fail to acquire the educational and occupational credentials that have been considered proper qualifications for officeholding. Our research findings create more questions than are answered in this respect, but they do raise the possibility that sex-role patterning of the contemporary family may be less an impediment to public activity than sex-role patterns of extrafamilial institutions.

A "New Woman" in Politics?

Women seem to be entering office at younger average ages than in the past. This may indicate change either in the characteristics of women entering or in the acceptance of women's qualifications for office. There are few signs in our data of a "new woman" in politics. If she is emerging, she exists in numbers too few to be revealed by statistical treatment.

Differences among officeholders by term of office are almost entirely absent in our data. Differences by age are almost as few in number. Women under 40 have higher education but differ little in other respects from older officeholders.

Perhaps as a byproduct of their education, they are somewhat more often in professional occupations, less often in managerial and administrative positions. But there are no apparent changes in the tendency to assume traditionally female occupations. The extent of their employment is similar to that of older officeholders. For the most part they are active in similar kinds of organizations, though there is a very slight tendency for younger women to be more active in feminist women's groups and less active in other kinds of women's organizations. There is also a slight tendency for younger women to have had less experience than older officeholders with past electoral office.

In view of the many documented and ongoing changes taking place in women's status, the small differences between younger and older women in office are puzzling. So are the even scarcer differences between women serving in their first term and those with longer tenure of office. Age differences, as well as differences by time of election to office, are often powerful indicators of social change. However, such differences among officeholders occur not merely as the result of social change. Women of differing ages may differ because some have been in office longer. Younger and older women may also differ because they are at diverse stages of the life cycle and have differing sets of nonpolitical roles. In addition, the impact of change is not always age-specific. These various tendencies may combine in such a way as to obscure actual differences in the kinds of women entering office.

One possible reason for little difference between younger and older women in office is that the younger women who are now entering office may be at an age or stage of life that leaves them relatively unaffected by changes experienced by the very young or by women now coming of age. Many women who are young relative to other women in office are actually over 35 and members of the "generation" growing up in the 1950's, a period associated with especially conventional views of women's roles.

Only repeated research on the connection between societal trends and the number and kinds of women entering public life can help to determine whether a new woman is appearing on the political scene. We shall be looking for her in future editions of Women in Public Office.

NOTES

[1]Additional papers are planned or in progress on, for example, organizational affiliations, on hours devoted to activities of office, on comparisons between Republicans and Democrats, and on the impact of age and experience. These papers will focus more narrowly on some aspect of the data, explicating more thoroughly the complex of relationships relevant to the aspect under scrutiny.

[2]Among the many issues of interpretation of research conducted at a single time period, two arise repeatedly in this analysis.

Problems of interpreting the causal direction of events. Statements of relationship between two or more phenomena will appear throughout this report. For example, we note that employed women devote fewer hours to their offices, on the average, than unemployed women. This simple research finding does not lead directly to an understanding of the process at work. It may be that employed women reduce the strain associated with multiple roles by giving fewer hours to their offices. Or it may be that after entering office, some women find that the office requires little of their time and enables them to seek outside employment. It is also possible that employment and hours devoted to office are not directly related in any causal chain. Some additional situation, such as relatively low socioeconomic status of the family, may lead some women both into the labor force and into less important and less demanding public offices, with no direct connection between the two events found to occur together.

Problems of interpreting variations by age or by tenure of office. Because of considerable interest in the question of whether women currently entering public office differ significantly from their predecessors, this report comments on differences in our data between younger and older women, and between those in their first term and more experienced officeholders. These differences can be interpreted in several ways. (The more technically minded reader will find a thorough explanation of problems of interpreting age data in Matilda White Riley, Marilyn Johnson and Anne Foner, Aging and Society, Vol. III: A Sociology of Age Stratification. New York: Russell Sage, 1972, chapter 2.) For example, if women who have held office for more than one term are different from newcomers, this could occur: (a) because newly elected women today differ from newly elected women in past elections; (b) because women entering office are similar no matter when they are elected but change with experience in office; (c) because women are similar when they first enter office no matter when they are elected, but only certain kinds of women go on to serve a second term; (d) some combination of the above. Only successive repetitions of the research over a period of time can help to eliminate all but one of these competing explanations.

[3]Only a few types of tables will be encountered in this report. The most common type utilizes percentages that add to 100% down each column of the table, as in Table 2-A. At the bottom of each column is given in parentheses

the number of officeholders constituting the base for calculation of the percentage. Officeholders not answering the question on which the tabulation is based, or to whom the question does not apply, are not included in the percentage base. At the top of each column is listed the office for which the tabulation has been made. Down the left-hand side of the table are the characteristics of officeholders (e.g., race, age, employment status) that are being tabulated for each office. Thus each row of the table represents the percentages of women in each type of office who display a particular characteristic. Whenever the total numbers are too small to justify percentages, this fact is signaled by placing the absolute number in parentheses in place of the percentage. Comparisons among officeholders can be made by reading each row across. In Table 2-A, for example, 6% of women serving in the state executive are black, as compared with 5% of state senators, 8% of state representatives, etc. Since there are only 19 women in Congress, the fact that 4 of these are black is expressed in parentheses as an absolute number rather than as a percentage.

In some tables, percentages in each column do not add to 100% because each officeholder may fit into more than one of the categories being tabulated. For example, Table 5 reports both the percentages of officeholders who remember their mothers as being interested in politics and the percentages who remember their fathers as being interested in politics. Each officeholder can be tabulated twice, once for mother and once for father. Therefore, the percentages will not add to 100% because the characteristics being tabulated are not mutually exclusive.

The second common type of table utilizes medians. The median is the middle number in a series of numbers. When applied to officeholders, a median means that 50% of women in a particular office are at or above that value and 50% are at or below the same value. Thus if the numbers 25, 32, 42, 54 and 67 represent years of residence in a community of five people, the median is 42 years. An example of this type of table is Table 7 which shows median years of residence in the community and state. The median number of years in the community for women serving in the U.S. House is 20. The number of officeholders included in the calculation of the median is found in parentheses below the median. In the case of the U.S. House, the number upon which the median is based is 12.

[4]The numbers reported here do not agree with those in the State Summary table because our analysis includes only cabinet-level positions, while the summary table includes such statewide offices as elected judiciary, university trustees, or state boards of education.

[5]New Hampshire is a small state, traditionally Republican, with a "citizen" legislature distinguished by its large size, token salaries and part-time legislators. Thus the profile of state representatives is heavily weighted by these and associated characteristics.

[6]The phrasing of the question proved to be ambiguous because some respondents were elected from wards to municipal councils and could choose to report either the size of their election district or the population of the municipality. However, the distinctive pattern of associations found between district size and other variables leads us to believe that the preponderance of respondents are reporting the size of the population served by their office rather than the size of wards or election districts.

[7]The relatively low number of women holding office in large cities requires additional data for interpretation. Although the U.S. population is concentrated in urban areas, a very large number of municipalities are quite small. In order to discover whether women are overrepresented in the smaller places, it will be necessary to compare the proportions of men and women from districts of similar size. Census data would permit comparison of the proportion of women officials from small districts with the proportion of <u>districts</u> that are small, but comparison would be valid only if the total number of members on a governing body did not vary with the size of the district population.

[8]This question appears regularly in the election surveys conducted by the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

[9]Similar to women in the general population, and supporting repeated past research, women in office remember fathers as considerably more likely than mothers to show interest in politics. The difference is striking; in every office, the proportion of fathers with high interest is about double the proportion of mothers. In an effort to discover whether we could isolate a variant that has often been hypothesized--a mother with higher interest than a father--we examined the within-family cross tabulations of mother's interest against father's. In only a tiny proportion of cases were there mothers whose interest in politics exceeded that of the father.

[10]A separate analysis of state representatives and municipal councilors reveals that the age pattern is true whether the officeholder is in her first term or in a higher term of office, and that term of office itself is not related to the degree of parental interest.

[11]In addition, analysis of males in the national sample replicates the general age pattern. Whether the age differences represent a general decline of interest in politics or the stage of life and current political interests of respondents cannot be ascertained without examination of age patterns in several studies repeated through a period of time.

[12]This hypothesized distinction between men and women in the way influence is gained in the community parallels Robert Merton's distinction between locals and cosmopolitans. (See Robert K. Merton, "Patterns of Influence: A Study of Interpersonal Influence and of Communications Behavior in a Local Community," in Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Frank N. Stanton, eds., Communications Research, 1948-49. New York: Harper & Row, 1949.)

[13]This conclusion is tentative, for we have evidence only from the "survivors" among all those who entered office at a particular period. It is always possible that younger women who enter office selectively drop out or are defeated for re-election, leaving a preponderance of older women currently in office among those entering at some earlier time. We might also note that a decline in age at entry may reflect a changing age profile of the population and may be equally true of men.

[14]Since few women in office are under 30, comparison is made with U.S. women 30 years of age and older.

[15]Since the numbers in these offices are small, it is difficult to conclude that the marital status of women in these two offices really differs from the others. The apparent differences may reflect the fluctuations that often occur when the numbers being compared are small.

[16]Approximately 10% of those returning questionnaires refused to report income. Whether nonrespondents are disproportionately of either higher or lower income than those who answered the question cannot be ascertained.

[17]See the 1972 election survey by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center and the 1974 General Social Survey conducted by National Opinion Research Center.

[18]Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie describe variations in political activity among different types of organizations in Participation in America. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

[19]Lower percentages of youth and school-related affiliations among officeholders in smaller districts may be explained by the fact that smaller districts have a somewhat higher proportion of older women beyond the child-rearing years.

[20]Verba and Nie, op. cit.

[21]See Marilyn Johnson, "Changing Patterns of Voluntary Affiliation in the Later Years." Paper for the 1975 meetings of the American Sociological Association.

[22]Although officeholders were asked to indicate the level to which each former office applied, we have not analyzed these separately because of the small numbers in each category.

[23]More precisely, there would appear to be a highly complex, and as yet incompletely analyzed, set of interrelationships among age, term of office, size of district population and past officeholding experience. These interrelationships result in an age pattern of past appointive and past party office that is usually curvilinear, i.e., higher among the middle-aged than among younger and older officials.

[24]We might note in passing that if, on the average, women in office earn less than men in office (we don't know whether they do), they would do so because women are concentrated in the smaller districts where the pay is low. The situation would be analogous to one in industry where it might be found that pay scales are uniform but that women are concentrated in the lower paying jobs.

[25]A full evaluation of the relation between hours devoted to office and these characteristics requires a more complex analysis than can be presented here. Showing only the paired relation between hours and each separate characteristic does not take account of the multiple interrelationships in the full set of data.

[26]Mayors and municipal councilors have been omitted from this tabulation because of difficulties in interpreting responses. A large proportion of mayors either have no committee assignments or are ex officio members of all committees. A sizable proportion of local councils do not operate under a committee structure. In addition, local councils may have few or no functions in many areas of government. Thus the meaning of the distribution of responses at local levels depends very heavily upon detailed knowledge of particular local governments.

NUMBERS OF WOMEN IN OFFICE: STATE SUMMARIES

State	U.S. House	State Exec.[1]	State Senate	State House	County	Townships[2]	Mayors	City Councils	State Judges[4]	State Bds. & Cmsns.
Alabama	0	9	0	1	3	-	7	78	1	20
Alaska	0	3	2	7	12	-	2	33	0	11
Arizona	0	1	5	13	1	-	6	33	6	152
Arkansas	0	1	0	3	0	-	29	131	1	106
California	2	3	0	3	13	-	32	188	7	193
Colorado	1	5	3	13	4	-	10	160	2	64
Connecticut	0	4	4	22	-	-	13	117	1	268
Delaware	0	2	2	8	1	-	3	19	0	95
Florida	0	1	1	12	17	-	13	161	0	37
Georgia	0	0	1	9	6	-	10	67	0	148
Hawaii	1	5	4	6	3	-	0	1	1	141
Idaho	0	1	1	9	3	-	7	38	5	142
Illinois	1	3	2	12	5	51	19	119	5	66
Indiana	0	1	3	6	2	102	0	30	1	188
Iowa	0	0	4	10	13	-	29	275	1	252
Kansas	1	4	1	8	3	40	21	144	1	173
Kentucky	0	3	2	3	15	-	8[3]	6[3]	1	5[3]
Louisiana	1	4	0	2	8	-	9	56	0	148
Maine	0	0	1	23	0	-	0	87	0	105
Maryland	2	0	3	16	14	-	5	54	1	32
Massachusetts	1	4	2	14	1	-	3	45	2	40
Michigan	0	21	0	9	61	303	14	211	3	155

[1]Numbers represent all cabinet officials and executive officials elected state wide. Totals for **State Executive Offices** include members of State Supreme Courts, members of State Boards of Education, and University Regents where these positions are elected state wide. Women serve in these offices in the following states: Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington. Officials holding these positions are listed in the body of the directory under **State Judiciary** and **State Boards and Commissions**.

[2]Where applicable (see appendix).

[3]Incomplete information.

[4]Numbers represent all state Appellate Courts and Trial Courts of General Jurisdiction.

NUMBERS OF WOMEN IN OFFICE (Continued)

State	U.S. House	State Exec.[1]	State Senate	State House	County	Town-ships[2]	Mayors	City Councils	State Judges[4]	State Bds. & Cmsns.
Minnesota	0	4	1	7	8	-	23	204	1	249
Mississippi	0	1	1	5	7	-	8	74	1	78
Missouri	1	0	1	11	8	-	28	267	0	104
Montana	0	2	4	10	0	-	6	51	0	83
Nebraska	1	5	1	0	1	-	12	71	2	139
Nevada	0	2	3	4	3	-	0	2	0	11
New Hampshire	0	0	2	102	4	-	5	34	0	0[3]
New Jersey	2	3	3	6	11	-	15	198	0	166
New Mexico	0	4	2	3	4	-	8	25	0	48
New York	3	5	3	6	30	16	26[3]	145[3]	2	70
North Carolina	0	2	2	13	18	-	10	131	1	67
North Dakota	0	0	3	13	5	-	4	65	0	48
Ohio	0	1	1	7	4	40	29	127	8	154
Oklahoma	0	0	1	5	2	-	17	75	8	180
Oregon	0	0	3	8	7	-	10	165	4	149
Pennsylvania	-	2	1	8	6	-	22	206	11	212
Rhode Island	0	3	2	7	-	-	2	19	1	202
South Carolina	0	0	0	7	5	-	5	67	0	124
South Dakota	0	4	4	7	4	-	12	38	1	122
Tennessee	1	2	1	4	41	-	2	48	0	27
Texas	1	3	1	7	20	-	36	241	2	153
Utah	0	3	0	8	0	-	3	37	0	142
Vermont	0	2	1	21	0	-	0	44	1	1[3]

[1]Numbers represent all cabinet officials and executive officials elected state wide. Totals for State Executive Offices include members of State Supreme Courts, members of State Boards of Education, and University Regents where these positions are elected state wide. Women serve in these offices in the following states: Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington. Officials holding these positions are listed in the body of the directory under State Judiciary and State Boards and Commissions.

[2]Where applicable (see appendix).

[3]Incomplete information.

[4]Numbers represent all State Appellate Courts and Trial Courts of General Jurisdiction.

NUMBERS OF WOMEN IN OFFICE (Continued)

State	U.S. House	State Exec.[1]	State Senate	State House	County	Town-ships[2]	Mayors	City Councils	State Judges[4]	State Bds & Cmsns.
Virginia	0	1	0	6	9	-	6	111	0	222
Washington	0	3	4	14	6	-	4	149	2	146
West Virginia	0	3	1	8	6	-	15	105	1	90
Wisconsin	0	3	1	9	60	-	10[3]	32[3]	1	155
Wyoming	0	1	1	6	2	-	8	26	0	84
Washington DC	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	3	6	0
TOTAL NUMBER OF WOMEN	19	134	89	521	456	552	566 (5931)	4813	92	5767
TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFICEHOLDERS	535	1300[5]	1978	5583	1700[6]		136000[6]		5940	unavailable
			7561							
PROPORTION OF OFFICEHOLDERS WHO ARE WOMEN	3.6%	10.3%	4.5%	9.3%	2.7%		4.4%		1.5%	-
			8.1%							

[1]Numbers represent all cabinet officials and executive officials elected state wide. Totals for State Executive Offices include members of State Supreme Courts, members of State Boards of Education, and University Regents where these positions are elected state wide. Women serve in these offices in the following states: Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington. Officials holding these positions are listed in the body of the directory under State Judiciary and State Boards and Commissions.

[2]Where applicable (see appendix).

[3]Incomplete information.

[4]Numbers represent all State Appellate Courts and Trial Courts of General Jurisdiction.

[5]The total number is an estimated figure gathered from sources within each state.

[6]Numbers are estimates arrived at by adjusting figures given in The U.S. Census of Governments, Vol. 6, Popularly Elected Officials of State and Local Governments (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967) p.7. They reflect the changes in total numbers of governing bodies as shown in The U.S. Census of Governments, Vol. 1, Governmental Organization (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972) p.1. A breakdown of figures for the individual totals of townships, mayors, and city councils was unavailable.

This chart is current for October, 1975. For information about results of November, 1975 State Executive and State Legislative races in Kentucky, Mississippi, New Jersey and Virginia please refer to the table of contents.

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